

*THE STORY OF THE  
OLD TESTAMENT*

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*FRANK SEAY*

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# **THE STORY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**



THE  
STORY OF THE OLD  
TESTAMENT

A PRIMER OF OLD TESTAMENT  
INTRODUCTION

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FRANK SEAY

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*FOURTH EDITION*

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To

JOHN A. RICE, D.D., LL.D.

FROM WHOM I HAVE RECEIVED STRONG AND VALUABLE STIMULUS IN  
OLD TESTAMENT STUDY



## PREFACE.

THIS little book purposes to be what its name indicates. It is not primarily an introduction to the different books of the Old Testament. Such has been written on a large and critical scale by Driver, and on a smaller primer scale by Robertson. The present treatise aims to present the story of the Old Testament, its general character, its history and institutions, its poetry and prophecy, and its essential unity and message as a whole in such a way as to be a primer of introduction, laying a basis and furnishing a stimulus for further study. How far it may accomplish this purpose is not a question to consider here. It is the hope and prayer of the author that in some cases at least it may contribute toward that end. Especial attention is called to the bibliography.

In a work of such a character it has been impossible to enter into the detailed critical questions, and this fact has made some passages seem unscholarly and unscientific; but it has seemed necessary to set a limitation to the task, and in such cases the face of the narrative has generally been followed.

The quotations are usually from the American Standard Revision, though sometimes no existing translation has been followed. It is hoped that the cross references in the text itself may make the Table of Contents serve in a measure as a partial index. Some retracing of the steps has been occasioned by the necessity for having twelve chapters of approximately equal length to conform to the general scheme of the series.

The thanks of the author are especially due to Dr. John A. Rice, pastor of the Rayne Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in New Orleans, to Bishop E. D. Mouzon, to Profs. H. L. Gray and J. H. Stevenson, and to Mrs. Seay for valuable help and criticisms, and to all Old Testament students whose works he has read.

FRANK SEAY.

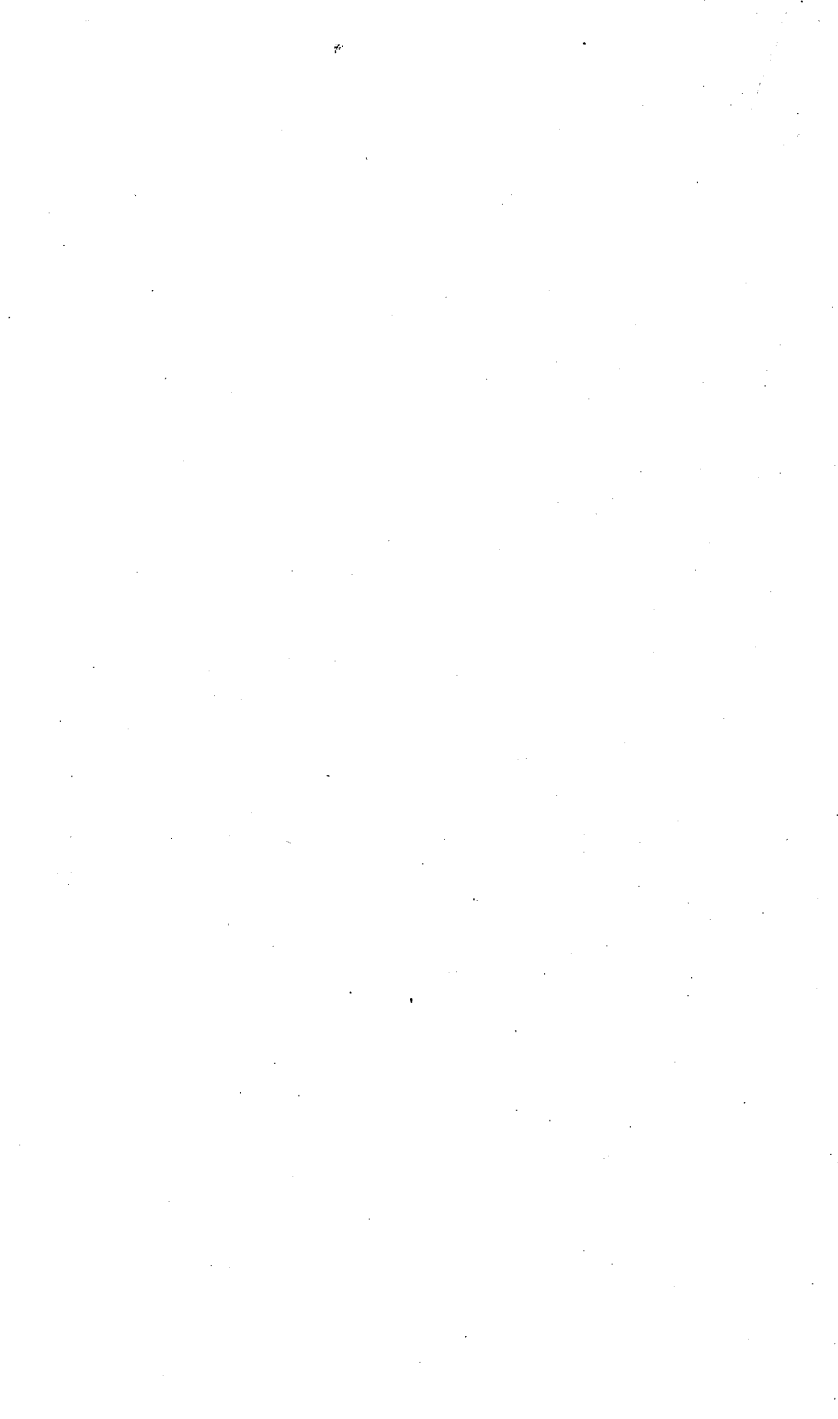
GEORGETOWN, TEX., June 23, 1910.

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS AS TO THE DAILY READINGS.

IT is better to read the chapter of the text both at the beginning and at the end of the readings for the week. In this way one knows first what to look for in the Daily Readings and what are their bearings on the week's theme, and then a final reading of the text clinches the whole impression of the lesson.

*Above everything, strive to get the deeper devotional meaning of each Daily Reading. The passages are chosen to feed the spiritual life, while illustrating some feature of the Bible as well.*

It is certain that to leave the thoughtful reader alone with a great passage and a directive suggestion is more conducive to an effectual "quiet hour" than a detailed analysis which directs the mind more to the form than to the message. The aim is to present passages which can be easily read in about fifteen minutes.



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CHAPTER I.  
WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

## CHAPTER I.

Let the aim of this week be to get a view of what the Bible is as literature.

*First Day.*—Numbers xxi. 14-18 and xxiii. 18-24. Especially should poetry be read in the Revised Version. Note how the fragment-song of the well is preserved by a people who know what the desert means. Note Balaam's faithfulness to God's message and the message itself.

*Second Day.*—2 Samuel i. 17-27. From what ancient book is the dirge taken? Verses 19-22 mourn over the defeat; 23-25, the character of the men; 26, the personal loss; 27, conclusion.

*Third Day.*—Judges ix. 1-21. A bit of barbarous history and a unique protest.

*Fourth Day.*—Sketch Genesis v. 1-32, and read vi. 1-8. A genealogical table and a historical summary.

*Fifth Day.*—Luke i. 1-4 and Romans i. 1-7, 11-16. Note two characteristic methods and purposes in writing.

*Sixth Day.*—Read Genesis xxiv. It is a little longer than the other references. Note the beauty and simplicity of an Old Testament personal narrative, reflecting as it does primitive customs.

*Seventh Day.*—Isaiah v. 1-17. Note the prophetic use of the parable or story and the eloquent, tremendous application and denunciation.

# THE STORY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

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## CHAPTER I.

### WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

THE most misunderstood subject in the world is God. Scarcely less understood is his revelation of himself in the Bible and in the person of Christ. The Bible is so little studied largely because whatever impulse men have thereto comes from an exhortation to religious duty rather than from any real grasp of the wonderful beauty and power of the Book itself. When once these are seen, its message will be eagerly devoured.

The word "Bible" means "book," and "the Bible" is the Book of books, preëminently "the Book." This name is, however, comparatively new, having through various stages won the day against other names for the entire collection of the sacred writings, the earliest of which—that of Jerome in the fourth century—was "The Divine Library." The Greek word *βιβλία* and the Latin translation *biblia*, or Bibles, was the usual designation until the thirteenth century, when by a curious happening the singular "Bible" came into vogue. The Latin nominative singular of the first declension being the same in form as the nominative neuter plural of the second, the translator mistook the latter for the former. The word "biblia" was therefore translated "Bible" instead of "Bibles," and the universal sense of the unity of the Bible message and theme has made this its permanent name. In reality, however, the Bible is not one book, but many books, yet its variety is not less noteworthy than its remarkable unity.

The name "Bible" is nowhere found within its own pages. Its usual name for itself is "The Scriptures" or "The Holy Scriptures." This as a collective name refers to the Old Testament alone; for the New Testament could not refer to itself as a collection before it came into being as such, though the reference in 2 Peter iii. 16 to Paul's writings or "scriptures" does seem to put the latter upon the same footing as the Old Testament collection.

The Old Testament is divided, according to its three strata of canonization, into "the law," "the prophets," and "the writings," sometimes called "The Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms," because the Psalter stood first in the collection of the miscellaneous writings of the Hebrew Bible. The growing sense of the unity of the different books and collections suggested by Paul's use of the term "Scripture" instead of "The Scriptures" marks the same progress within the New Testament era that is marked by the growth from "Bibles" to "Bible" in the history of the Church.

The larger divisions or canons are still further divided into books—or, to be more accurate, are composed of books—and the books are divided into chapters and verses. The chapters and the verses in the New Testament and possibly in the Old are afterthoughts made for convenience of reference. The book is the basic unit of the Bible, and is named according to subject, author, literary character, or some key word. Many of the books are composite, and many drawn from still older books. Besides the Davidic Psalms, for example, there are those attributed to Asaph and to the sons of Korah, and many, including some of the most beautiful and best known, are anonymous. The thirtieth and thirty-first chapters of Proverbs are attributed in the book itself to Agur and to King Lemuel respectively, while the first chapter of the book is headed "The Proverbs of Solomon," "Now the acts of David the King,



first and last," according to the book of Chronicles, "behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the history of Nathan the prophet, and in the history of Gad the seer, with all his reign and his might, and the times that went over him, and over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries." (1 Chron. xxix. 29, 30.) At least two of these books mentioned as sources have not come down to us. Older poems and proverbs are sometimes quoted, as the Song of Deborah in the fifth chapter of Judges and the little verse from the book of Jashar in Joshua x. 12, 13:

"Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon;  
And thou, Moon, in the valley of Aijalon."

The classic New Testament passage for the use of previous sources is the opening paragraph of Luke's Gospel: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed."

But the processes so far studied give us the Bible in a language unknown, or rather in languages unknown. A long and weary task of translation is necessary before its messages are even linguistically accessible to the modern world. Preëminent among the translations is the Septuagint (abbreviated lxx.) or Greek translation of the Old Testament made by Alexandrian scholars in the first half of the second century before Christ. In the fourth century *anno Domini* came the Vulgate, the Latin translation, which is still the standard version of the Roman Catholic Church. It is the

THIS TABLE, TAKEN FROM THE AUTHOR'S "GIST OF THE OLD TESTAMENT," PRESENTS THE SOURCES OF THE BIBLE AND THE STAGES BY WHICH IT CAME TOGETHER.

<p>(22)</p> <p>Songs and Poems:  Wars of Jehovah,  Book of Jashar,  Lamech, Deborah,  Davidic Songs, etc.</p> <p>Annals and Histories:  Kings of Judah,  Kings of Israel.</p> <p>Seers and Prophets:  Iddo, Gad, Nathan, Amos, Hosea, etc.</p> <p>Proverbs, Sayings, and Laws:  Iotham's Fable,  Judges ix. 7ff, Proverbs, Laws of Levites, etc.</p>	<p>Histories:  Kings, Samuel, etc.</p> <p>Legal Codes:  Deuteronomy,  Leviticus.</p> <p>Prophets:  Amos, etc.</p> <p>Collections:  Psalms, Proverbs, etc.</p>	<p>Law,  Prophets,  Writings.</p> <p>Old Testament.</p>	<p>BIBLE.</p>
<p>Sayings (<i>Logia</i>),  Mark,  The Many (Luke i. 1),  Jerusalem Records,  "We" sources,  Letters of Paul and others,  Apocalypse.</p>	<p>The Gospels or Biographies of  Jesus,  Acts,  Letters,  Apocalypse, or Revelation.</p>	<p>New Testament.</p>	

work of Jerome, and is based on older Latin translations. Portions of the Bible were early translated into English by Bede and others, but the first English translation of the whole Bible was made by Wycliffe in the latter part of the fourteenth century. It was made from the Vulgate. The real foundation, however, of the superb style of our present versions is the translation from the original made under heroic circumstances by William Tyndale a century and a half later. Several versions followed, culminating in the Authorized Version of 1611, made by scholars under the authority of James I.

Many translations of portions of the Bible have been made by recent scholars, the most important of which is the Twentieth Century New Testament; but by far the best English version of the entire Bible is the Revised Version of 1881-85, of the renditions of which the American Standard is the most accurate. The language has changed greatly since 1611, and many words have widely different meaning now from what they had when the Authorized Version was translated. "But unto thee have I cried, O Lord; in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee," says Psalm lxxxviii. 13. The word "prevent," however, has by a natural evolution come to mean "hinder." The Revised Version restores to us the meaning the Authorized Version presented in its own age: "In the morning shall my prayer come before thee." Further, in the early seventeenth century scholarship had not attained its present efficiency. The Authorized Version, for example, reading the feeling of a more humane age into the passage makes Lamech penitent for a violent deed and fearful of awful consequences: "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold." But the case is very different; he

is a primitive savage brandishing his tomahawk. The Revised Version makes this plain:

For I have slain a man for wounding me,  
And a young man for bruising me:  
If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,  
Truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

In other words, the man who molests Lamech shall fare even worse than he who strikes Cain.

The wealth of the world's scholarship has thus been lavished upon the Bible from the time of the early scribes unto our own day. Monuments and ruins have been dug up to throw light on its contents, old manuscripts and versions have been discovered and pressed into service to establish a perfect text, ancient languages and customs and literatures—indeed, all available sources of information have been studied for its interpretation. The world crowns its warriors and heroes, but forgets the toil, patience, self-sacrifice, and courage of the man who writes a Hebrew lexicon or establishes a correct text for the Bible. Yet through this and similar work alone has the best that has been thought and done come down to us. Unrewarded scholars have saved us from ignorance, and through their untiring efforts the message of the Bible has been presented accurately to us. "There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it. Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man." (Eccles. ix. 14, 15.) No book in the world has had so wonderful and interesting an external history, and from the standpoint of the intellect alone the Bible furnishes as great a realm for rich enjoyment as any other study. All the wonderful toil and patience of our God, whose working the workings of his servants are, from the first writing of the oldest source

of our Bible to the latest scholarship which has opened its interpretation to us, draw us to its pages.

But the internal history is more beautiful, more wonderful still. The messages are the very heart's blood of the messengers, and the remarkable "dramatic movement" of the history and literature as a whole is the epitome of the upward strivings of humanity after God and of God's revelation of himself to man. Besides the divisions of the Bible according to external groupings, there may be cross classifications according to internal character. Some divide it into historic, poetic, prophetic, and epistolary parts. Others speak of the prophetic, priestly, and wisdom elements of the Old Testament. Lying between the two, we may note the following classifications:<sup>1</sup>

1. *History*. Genesis to Chronicles, in large measure. History found in some Psalms and prophecies, letters, etc. The Gospels, especially the first three, and Acts.

2. *Prophecy*. Isaiah to Malachi; some of the words of Jesus and Paul. A special kind of this element is the apocalyptic, parts of Daniel, and the Revelation.

3. *Poetry*. Psalms, Job, scattered poems. Ruth and Esther might from their literary style be classed as poetic.

4. *Legal Codes*. Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Exodus in part, etc.

5. *Philosophy*, including the wisdom element of the Old and New Testaments, the letters of Paul, and the underlying basis of the thinking of historian and prophet.

Any book, or even any passage, may fall under more than

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<sup>1</sup>It is not claimed that these divisions are exclusive. Indeed, it is difficult to get divisions which do not omit most important phases of the literature and overlap so largely as to destroy their value. For example, the division into prophetic, priestly, and wisdom elements do not lead one to infer that there is any poetry in the Old Testament. Yet one could not add a "poetic element," for all three of the elements mentioned contain poetry.

one of these heads. Much of the history and of the poetry is prophetic in character, and the prophets make generous citations from past and contemporary history.

From these perhaps tedious classifications it will be seen that the Bible includes all the forms of writing usually found in the literature of a great people. It contains many books of many kinds, covering a period of many centuries—a literature as varied as was the life of the ages in which it was written.

Roughly speaking, the main stream of modern civilization knows seven great literatures: the Greek, the Roman, the Hebrew, the Italian, the German, the English, and the French. The last four build on the three ancient ones, and the Bible is the cream of one of these three basic literatures. Its literary power is generally recognized: the beauty of the Psalms, the superb imagery of the prophets, and the classic sweep of Job. Even Renan, the most conspicuous French skeptic of the last century, calls Luke "the most beautiful book in the world."

Beneath all its variety in age, style, authorship, and literary character there is a common theme which makes the growth of the names from "Scriptures" to "Scripture" within the Bible and from "Bibles" to "Bible" without, a natural growth. The Greeks wrote history for history's sake, to tell what they or their fathers had done. In it the doings of the gods and their relation to men intermingle only as a part of the story. The Bible history is primarily the record of God's dealing with his people. Abraham's migration is under the inspiration of Jehovah's covenant, and the exodus from Egypt is God's deliverance of Israel. In his address when turning the rulership over to Saul (and this is but a résumé of the history written in the spirit of the whole) "Samuel said unto the people, It is Jehovah that appointed Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt. Now therefore stand still, that I

may plead with you before Jehovah concerning all the righteous acts of Jehovah, which he did to you and to your fathers. When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your fathers cried unto Jehovah, then Jehovah sent Moses and Aaron, who brought forth your fathers out of Egypt, and made them to dwell in this place. But they forgot Jehovah their God; and he sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the host of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab; and they fought against them. And they cried unto Jehovah, and said, We have sinned, because we have forsaken Jehovah, and have served the Baalim and the Ashtaroth: but now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee. And Jehovah sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side; and ye dwelt in safety." (1 Sam. xii. 6-11.)

The prophets, it is needless to say, are the spokesmen of Jehovah; they are the preachers of Israel's religion. The Bible's poetry is religious poetry—largely prayer and praise. The legal codes and laws are religious. The Church and the State were one; and when the State died, the Church survived.

The existence of God is an underlying assumption, and the philosophy is a philosophy of life and of the relation of God to man. The latter is largely Paul's theme. Job deals with the problem of evil, essentially a religious problem, and the book gives it a religious solution, while throughout the whole wisdom element "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." The account of the origin of things is of God's creation of the world, and the opening thought of this narrative and therefore of the Bible is: "In the beginning God."

The Greeks have given to the world its philosophy and its art. If one wishes a discussion of the infinite or of the principles of ethics, it is to Plato and Aristotle, not to Isaiah

and Jeremiah, that he must go. Since the making of images in the likeness of Him whom they worshiped was forbidden, no such chiseling as Phidias's statues of his gods was possible. Where the general tone was so seriously religious, whatever dramatic power there was would express itself in arousing the consciences of present audiences, not in the production of works of art for the stage.

The Romans have contributed law and government and the Greeks philosophy and art to modern civilization. It was Greek influence that made Rome's best poetry and philosophy. But it was Roman genius for politics that, having conquered the Grecian world, held it together for centuries, uniting peoples of diverse climes, habits, and tastes into one great empire. The solution of fundamental problems of law and government was not to be expected from the Hebrew people, inhabiting as they did a narrow strip along the Mediterranean coast, whose dominion was never large, who were themselves more often governed than governing, and whose deepest interest was religious rather than political. They have given the world its religion. Judaism and Mohammedanism (in some measure) as well as Christianity come from the Hebrews.

The Bible, then, is one of the world's three basic literatures (the Old Testament being itself the basis of the New), giving us one of the three contributions to modern life. But the greatest of these is religion. The majesty of the Bible theme and the sweep of its movement make it incomparably the volume of supreme interest and beauty and power, and, above all, is the significant fact that herein is found a revelation of God himself to man.

#### QUESTIONS UPON PROBLEMS OF CHAPTER I.

1. What is the meaning and significance of the word "Scriptures?" Compare it with the word "Bible."
2. What other noteworthy name does the Bible give itself? What is the meaning of the word "oracle?"



3. By what means does the voice of God come to the world? Consider the divine and human elements respectively in Revelation. Were the men or the words inspired? Were the men like pens in the hands of God, or were they brains and hearts illumined by his Spirit? Consider well this problem and all its implications, for upon your answer to these questions will depend your view of many of the important questions of Bible study.

4. How many books are there in the Old Testament? Take the Old Testament contents and write out the number of books which you would class under each of the heads on page 25 and preserve to compare with your later idea. (It might be well to make all such notes in a permanent notebook or a flyleaf of the textbook in order to have them always at hand.)

5. What are the various steps by which the Bible came together? What are the steps by which it gets to us in the form in which we have it?

6. What is your estimate of the value of the scholar to the world? How far, would you say, is his work secondary and noncreative?

7. How does the Bible's central theme show itself in the Bible history, poetry, law, and prophecy respectively?

8. What is the Vulgate? What is the Septuagint? How is the word "Septuagint" frequently abbreviated? Have you ever heard the tradition concerning its translation? If so, state it. Consider the world's taste for the marvelous and the ease with which miraculous stories arise.

9. Write out clearly and concisely your answer to the question, What is the Bible?



CHAPTER II.  
THE HISTORICAL BOOKS.

## CHAPTER II.

Let us try this week to get the character of the book of Genesis as a representative of the historical books and for its wonderful story of the Hebrews. The earlier chapters of Genesis and the other historical books are left for later consideration.

*First Day.*—Genesis xii. 1-9 and xiii. 1-18. The religious, generous Abraham and his "venture of faith." Get into the spirit of the ancient tribal world and of its leader.

*Second Day.*—Genesis xix. 9-29. The wicked cities.

*Third Day.*—Genesis xxiii. Get into the spirit of the universal story.

*Fourth Day.*—Genesis xxv. 19-34. An automobile and a brown-stone front or a cultured mind and a noble soul—which?

*Fifth Day.*—Genesis xxvii. 46-xxviii. 22. A first night from home. Happy is the boy or the girl who is true to the visions and the vows of his first night away from home.

*Sixth Day.*—Genesis xxix. 1-20. The beautiful love story.

*Seventh Day.*—Genesis xlvi. 1-xlix. 2. Parting blessings.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE HISTORICAL BOOKS.

THE first book of the Old Testament, Genesis, is in the Hebrew Bible designated by its opening word "Bereshith," or "In beginning," and some maintain that the English title is a translation of this Hebrew name by the anglicized Greek word "Genesis," or "Beginning." Others insist that the name comes from the Greek Septuagint, where the heading of the various sections of the book is "Biblia geneseos," or book of the generations, *genesis* being the nominative of *geneseos*. Whether the one or the other of these causes be the source of our modern English title of the book or whether both may have figured, the title in either case would be significant, for Genesis is both a book of the beginnings of all things and also a book of beginnings or origins or generations.

Genesis falls into ten (or eleven) sections marked by the ten-times recurring words: "These are the generations of." (Compare ii. 4; v. 1<sup>1</sup>; vi. 9; x. 1; xi. 10; xi. 27; xxv. 12, 19; xxxvi. 1; xxxvii. 2.) But these are merely the framework and do not mark the more significant divisions. The two grand divisions are chapters i.-xi., the origin and early history of the world and of man, and chapters xii.-l., the origin and early history of the Hebrews. The leading subdivisions of the former are: The creation or origin of the world (i. 1-ii.3), in which man is included as the crowning work of creation; the origin of the human race ii. 4-25; the fall or the origin of sin (chapter iii.); the origin of worship (chapter iv.). Then follows the multiplication of man in the earth: the flood, the confusion of tongues, and the dispersion of mankind. The second grand division re-

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<sup>1</sup>A slight variation of the words.

counts the history of the patriarchs, chiefly of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

Different portions of Genesis manifest certain peculiarities, notably in the use of the names for God. Elohim, or simply "God," is the divine name in Genesis i. 1-ii. 3, whereupon there immediately follows an extended passage using the name "Jehovah God," translated "Lord God" in the Authorized and English Revised Versions. Many scholars think they find here and elsewhere two or more separate strata corresponding to the use of these names and to other peculiarities. These strata they suppose to be earlier sources, such as those to which the Bible itself refers in Joshua and Chronicles. Others think that the author, with conscious literary skill and power, uses simply "God" for the majestic creation name and "Jehovah God" when treating of the Divine Being in his tender covenant relations with men.

Though Genesis nowhere claims Moses as its author, it, with the four following books, has been traditionally ascribed to him. The Mosaic authorship is, however, disputed by many modern scholars who hold that such a statement as, to take a single example, "The Canaanite was then in the land" (xii. 6; xiii. 7, etc.), must have been written after the Canaanite had ceased to be in the land, and that such statements and other arguments are too many to be explained by an interpolation theory. No treatise which failed to mention these facts would be a fair and honest introduction to Old Testament study, yet it is beyond the scope of such a task as ours to enter more deeply into these critical questions.

The next stage of the history discusses the Mosaic age; and the Bible books which deal with the history of this period are Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, three books which, with Genesis and Leviticus, are usually grouped together as the Pentateuch, or five books forming the Hebrew canon of the law.

Exodus, named from the Greek word, now thoroughly

anglicized, recounts the Israelitish "exodus" or "going out" from Egypt. The divisions of the book are given differently by different scholars. Perhaps as natural a division as any is as follows: Chapter i. 1 to chapter ii. 22, introduction; chapter ii. 23 to chapter x., Israel's last days in Egypt, leading up to the exodus, and closing with Moses's ultimatum to Pharaoh, "Not a hoof shall be left behind," and "I shall see thy face no more" (x. 26, 29); then chapters xi.-xix. 2, the departure from Egypt and the journey to Sinai; the remaining chapters (xix. 3-xl.) detail Israel's eventful stay at Sinai.

Exodus gives only seven verses to the period of the Egyptian bondage from the death of Joseph to the events immediately preceding the birth of Moses. The annals of slavery are usually uneventful, detailing only the monotonous round of daily drudgery. The remainder of the first chapter sketches rapidly the Egyptian plan to check the growth of the Hebrew people by killing the male children. The first twenty-two verses of chapter ii. record the birth and early life of Moses. The remainder of the book covers a period of less than two years; but the events of these two years are of importance to the national life of Israel, comparable with the Magna Charta to England or the Revolution to the United States.

Deuteronomy covers likewise but a short space of time—the last month of the forty years of Israel's nomad life. The last chapter recounts the death of Moses and the succession of Joshua, with the statement that there has "not risen since in Israel a prophet like unto Moses."

The period between the first two years and the last month of the wilderness life is recounted in the book of Numbers, so named from the several "numberings" of the tribes therein contained. Much of it, however, like Leviticus, is given to laws and ceremonies rather than to history proper. The following summary from the "International Critical Com-

mentary on Numbers," by Dr. George Buchanan Gray, will give an idea of its character: "The first section of Numbers (i. 1-x. 10) may be regarded as an appendix to the books of Exodus and Leviticus; the latter part of the last section is, though far less closely, related to Deuteronomy." It is "a section somewhat mechanically cut out of the whole of which it forms a part," and "unity of subject is found only when chapter i. 1 to chapter x. 10 is disregarded. The subject of the remainder of the book (chapters x. 11-xxxvi. 13) is the fortunes of the Israelites after leaving Sinai up to the point at which they are ready to enter the land of promise." The chief interest of Numbers in the popular mind has been the story of Balaam and Balak, told in chapters xxii.-xxiv. The analysis of Leviticus and Deuteronomy must be postponed to Chapter V.

Following immediately upon the Pentateuch is the book of Joshua, so named because it recounts Joshua's leadership in the conquest of Canaan or perhaps because Joshua was believed to be the historian of his own doings, or for both reasons combined. Because of its close association with the five Mosaic books, it is frequently grouped with them, forming the Hexateuch [Greek ἕξ (hex)=six]. It continues the narrative of Deuteronomy and betrays in a marked degree the influence of that book. Its first twelve chapters recount the initial conquest of Canaan. Chapters xiii.-xxii. give the allotment of the tribes, including the cities of refuge and the Levitical settlements; while chapters xxiii. and xxiv. present Joshua's noble farewell and record his death and burial and the faithfulness of Israel during the lives of the elders who outlived Joshua.

The next book in our Bible tells of the life of the Hebrew tribes between the settlement in Canaan and the beginnings of movements looking to national unity. "Judges" is so named because it recounts the history of the number of leaders bearing that title. But we must beware of thinking



of these men as judges in our modern sense. It is true that a large number of the decisions of disputes between the members of various tribes fell to the leaders of these tribes, but this was only a small part of their work. The name "Heroes," "Deliverers," or "Chieftains" would give a better idea of the character and work of these men.

Judges i. 1-ii. 5 is a prefatory statement of the movement of the tribes, upon which follows an account of the death of Joshua parallel to that in the close of the book bearing his name, and a general statement of the character of the history to be related. The succeeding section from chapter ii. 7 through chapter xvi., after making a brief reference to Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar, presents an account of how Deborah aroused Barak and a few of the tribes to assert Israel's power in the name of Israel's God; of (chapters vi.-x.) the remarkable career of Gideon, followed by the miserable weakness of his son Abimelech; then of the exploits of Jephthah imbedded in references to five lesser judges and, at the closing of the section, of the interesting career of Samson. Chapters xvii.-xxv. furnish supplementary insight into the character of the times by relating respectively the migration of the Danites and the war upon Benjamin.

The Book of Ruth finds its place in the English Bible, as in the Septuagint, between the books of Judges and 1 Samuel; but there is some doubt regarding its original place in the canon of the Jewish Church.<sup>1</sup> In the modern Hebrew Bible it stands among the writings immediately following the Song of Songs. It presents the personal life of the times in which or of which it was written away from the general current of what is usually counted history. The course of human history moves, however, more in the heart

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<sup>1</sup>See Ryle's "The Canon of the Old Testament," index Ruth and pp. 240-245.

throbs of the people than in the outward events of nations; and Ruth, with its pastoral scene of remarkable literary beauty, upon any theory not unjustly has a place among the historical books. The book is so short as hardly to need division. Its message has to do with Israel's wider outlook, and will be discussed in Chapter XII.

The two books of Samuel were originally one. In the Septuagint and in the Vulgate they are grouped with the two books of Kings, thus making four books of kings, or kingdoms; in the English Bible, as in the Hebrew, they stand as 1 and 2 Samuel. These books must have been so named because Samuel is the principal figure in the early part of the history and not because Samuel wrote them, for his death is recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of the first book; and when the book closes, Saul is long since dead, and David, after a long life, is ready to be gathered to his fathers. Practically the entire history of these three leaders—Samuel, Saul, and David—is recorded in these two books of Samuel.

Next come 1 and 2 Kings, called in the Septuagint and the Vulgate the third and fourth books of Kings. They contain our chief record of the national life of the Hebrews. Hitherto it has been the history of the tribes, but with Samuel, Saul, and David the transition is made. The first eleven chapters of 1 Kings detail Solomon's reign, power, wealth, and wisdom. The remaining chapters of 1 Kings and the first seventeen chapters of 2 Kings recount the fortunes of the two kingdoms, as they run side by side till at last the northern kingdom succumbs before Assyria. The remainder of 2 Kings records the history of Judah until she falls before Babylon.

Within this period falls the chief development of Israel's religious life. Then lived and labored all of her greater prophets—Elijah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, and, toward the close, Jeremiah. The work of the future was a work of

conserving, amid the political disaster and the growth of philosophic doubt, the heritage of the past, and of building a larger hope upon this foundation.

Of the books thus far studied, the Pentateuch forms the first canon, or collection of books regarded as sacred, and, as a rule, of religious and ecclesiastical life. This first canon was called the Law. The other books, except Esther and perhaps Ruth, belonged to the canon of the prophets and are history written in true prophetic spirit. The third division of the Old Testament canon, mentioned in chapter i., is "the writings," and we are now to consider those historical books that find a place in this third division or canon.

The two books of Chronicles, which in our Bible stand next to the books of Kings, stood in the Hebrew Bible last of all. With the books of Ezra and Nehemiah (formerly, like 1 and 2 Chronicles, forming but one book), they present (if the initial genealogical tables be included) a continuous narrative from the creation to the return of the exiles and the restoration of the fallen Judea and Jerusalem, just as Judges, Samuel, and Kings together form a narrative from the conquest of Canaan to the exile. But as the latter are written chiefly from the prophetic standpoint, the former represent the viewpoint of that other side of Old Testament religious life, the priestly. The aim of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, says Driver, is that "of giving a history of Judah with special reference to the institutions connected with the temple and after the restoration." These books show evident kinship to Leviticus and Ezekiel, as do Judges, Samuel, and Kings to Deuteronomy and the older prophets.

The name "Chronicles" is borrowed by Luther from Jerome. The Hebrew name of the book known to English Bible readers as Chronicles is *Dibhré Hayyamim*, literally "The words of the days," a term, says Driver, used to denote an official diary. The first nine chapters are a series of genealogies. The narrative really begins in chapter x. with

the founding of the monarchy and follows the history of Judah until the time of Cyrus, with very meager reference to the northern kingdom. "This," says McFadyen, in his "Messages of the Prophetic and Priestly Historians," "is the key to the book. Nothing is of real interest but Judah, and in Judah Jerusalem, and in Jerusalem the temple."

Ezra and Nehemiah are our chief sources concerning the time of the restoration, at least in the "I-sections," which were written, it seems, by men who, like Haggai and Zechariah, took leading parts in the events recorded. These "I-sections" are Ezra vii. 27f and the first seven chapters of Nehemiah.

Immediately following Nehemiah is a book which, like Ruth, has been the occasion of much dispute. The scene of Esther is laid in the Persian court, and the story is of a Jewish maiden who became a Persian queen and who wins everlasting honor by her willingness to risk her own life to save her people. As Ruth in its wider outlook reflects the prophetic spirit, so Esther in its emphasis upon strictly Jewish woes and triumphs as well as in its reference to the origin of the feast of the Purim reflects the priestly side of Hebrew thought. The explanation of the origin of this feast indeed, it is thought by many, is the purpose of the book. Esther is unique in that the divine name nowhere appears within its pages.

It must not be assumed, however, that all of the Old Testament history is contained in the historical books any more than that because a book is classed as historical it has no priestly or prophetic character. As already indicated, the chief historical books open respectively the canons of the law and of the prophets, while Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah are decidedly priestly in character. Much of the history in the strictest sense of the word is to be found in the books of the prophets and in the Psalms. Jeremiah's life and prophecies are as much a part of Hebrew history as are

the life of David and the battles of the judges, while the forty-sixth (if, indeed, the forty-sixth Psalm can be referred to that period) and one hundred and thirty-seventh Psalms give respectively as valuable a historical picture of the invasion of Sennacherib and of the life in exile as can be found anywhere. The poetry, prophecies, and institutions, furthermore, are themselves the most important aspect of the history as a whole.

#### QUESTIONS ON THE PROBLEMS OF CHAPTER II.

1. Each of the ten sections of Genesis purposes to relate respectively the "Generations" of what or whom? (See references in the text.)

2. Compare these with the subdivisions of the two grand divisions. Which seem more vital to the thread of the narrative, these or the ten sections referred to above? Why?

3. Read Genesis i. 1-ii. 3 and then ii. 4-25. What differences or likenesses do you see, and how would you state them? Write a full sketch of them.

4. Considering the space and time given to the various periods, what would you say was the purpose of the Hebrew historian? Would a writer whose purpose was to write the history of the Hebrews thus divide his space and time?

5. Read the story of Balaam and Balak. Is it prose or poetry? How far does this and the fact that it is personal narrative explain its hold on the popular mind? What else may have figured to make it so universally known? Compare Jonah and Daniel.

6. If Moses did not write Genesis, what effect would that have on your estimation of Genesis? on your faith and religious life? What if he did not write Deuteronomy?

7. How, think you, did the author of Genesis get his information concerning the patriarchs, the flood, etc.?

8. How are the books of Samuel and Kings grouped in the Septuagint? how in the Vulgate? how in the Hebrew and English Bibles? Which grouping do you consider the best?

9. What books tell respectively of the Patriarchal, Mosaic, Tribal, and National Ages?

10. What is the length of the period covered respectively by Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua?

11. Which are the priestly, and which the prophetic historical books?



### CHAPTER III.

#### CHARACTER AND OUTLINE OF THE EARLIER HISTORY.

### CHAPTER III.

*First Day.*—Exodus i. 8-ii. 10. The persecution, and the birth of Moses.

*Second Day.*—Exodus iii. 1-17. Moses's vision and call.

*Third Day.*—Exodus xiv. The great deliverance.

*Fourth Day.*—Deuteronomy xxxiv. and Joshua i. 1-9. Death of Moses and the succession of Joshua.

*Fifth Day.*—1 Samuel i. 1-28. The longing for motherhood; the foundation of society.

*Sixth Day.*—1 Samuel iii. 1-20. God's call of a boy and his growth to manhood.

*Seventh Day.*—1 Samuel xi. Saul to the rescue.



## CHAPTER III.

### CHARACTER AND OUTLINE OF THE EARLIER HISTORY.

PERHAPS the most popular study among the children of our public schools is the study of history, and this love for the deeds of the past livingly retold persists to old age. Indeed, the same love that makes the child listen to grandmother's story of Bunker Hill makes grandmother tell it.

In the historical books of the Old Testament, whose general character and outlines we have considered, there is a most fascinating story of the development of a remarkable people.

"The decades guard with flaming sword  
The gates of long ago"—

the paradise of primeval innocence; a disastrous flood has prepared the way for a new beginning on the earth; differentiation of race and language has taken place; and a quiet pastoral people are settled in the fertile fields of Mesopotamia, when Abram (or as he is later called, Abraham), a promising man of some possessions, feels the call of God to the Far West. A religious motive causes his distant migration, and high hopes fill his heart. He sets out as the chieftain of a semibarbarous tribe. The meaning of the story is frequently missed by reading modern conditions into a past age. The consequence is in this case the discordant notes of an ancient saint and a twentieth century background. The picture is absurd, and we do not laugh merely because it is our own production. Abraham's migration is not like the moving of an old man with a gray beard and a large retinue of servants from the Atlantic Coast to California. There was, indeed, an advanced civilization in the land of his birth; but he was not in close touch with it, and the migration of tribes was not infrequent in his day. Abraham and his de-

pendents set forth on their long journey toward the coasts of the Mediterranean. Having here found its orbit, the tribe becomes a roving band and moves within certain well-defined limits. The chief occupation is sheep- and cattle-raising, and the greener pastures and the fresher waters are the determining factors in tribal movements.

Like the lower forms of life, the tribe grows until it becomes too large for nourishment as a single body; then it divides and becomes two. Nowhere are the biological laws as they touch the realm of sociology more perfectly illustrated, for nowhere are the easy stages of transition from unsettled to settled life more compactly presented. A quarrel arises "between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle." Their possessions had become too great for harmony in their simple form of tribal organization. There is but one remedy—division; for other stages must precede confederation under a designated leader or king. The generous old Abraham, though having every right in the matter, calls his nephew and lays before him the situation: "And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we are brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou take the right hand, then I will go to the left. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the Plain of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before Jehovah destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, like the garden of Jehovah, like the land of Egypt, as thou goest unto Zoar. So Lot chose him all the Plain of the Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other." (Gen. xiii. 8-11.)

Another type of civilization existing side by side with tribal life is the city type, the most prominent examples of which in this section seem to have been Sodom and Gomor-

rah, situated by what is now the Dead Sea. These early cities have their confederacies, their wars, their treaties. A war breaks out between two of the primitive confederacies, and the kings of the cities of Shinar, Ellasar, Elam, and Goiim are arrayed against the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah and their confederates. Lot meanwhile, attracted by the allurements of the city, has abandoned his old tribal life and dwells in Sodom. The result of the battle is disastrous to Sodom and Gomorrah, and Lot, along with his neighbors, is captured. Here the character of Abraham as the head of a powerful tribe is made evident: "When Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued as far as Dan. And he divided himself against them by night, he and his servants, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people. And the king of Sodom went out to meet him, after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him, at the vale of Shaveh." (Gen. xiv. 14-17.) In the same way Abimelech, another man of importance (Gen. xxi. 22f), seeing the power of Abraham, desires a treaty with him, for with all his weakness this man is a force to be reckoned with in the crude political movements of his day. And these things are but types of the activities of this picturesque life.

The social and moral standards were low, and the life must not be judged by the ideals of our more enlightened age. A suggestion to polygamy comes from the wife (Gen. xvi. 2), and Abraham, the best man of his day, so far from risking all for Sarah's protection, exposes her to insult merely for his own safety. Later Jacob finds no inconsistency between his religion and his unfair dealings with his employer.

But in all their life religion is the dominant force, and as the centuries pass it is the power which raises the Hebrews to higher things. Abraham's basic trait is devotion to his God, and wherever he goes he builds an altar for worship. And though not without faults, he is withal not only a religious but a brave man, willing to risk battle and able to return a conqueror of conquerors. Nevertheless, he is not warlike, and his battle is a bit of generous service for the release of the nephew who had not been generous to him. The picture of this quiet, unobtrusive man, generous and religious, partaking naturally of the low ideals of his age, but with his face toward the larger moral future, must have had a wonderful effect upon the course of Hebrew life and character. "Thus will your enemies do to your walls," said Remus, the athletic younger brother of the founder of Rome, as he ran and leaped over them. "And thus," answered Romulus, smiting him through with a javelin, "will I do to them." In line with this, the Romans naturally became the conquerors of the world. For the Hebrews, on the other hand, the murdered Abel, and not the murderer Cain, is the hero, and it is the life of the kind old patriarch that stands in the center of a people's thought and affection. The Hebrews naturally therefore have taught the world how to find God and how to live.

As is the case in heathen lands to-day, the choice of husband or wife is in the hands of the parents, and the desire for progeny precedes the higher relation of love between man and wife. A lovely picture against the background of this lower social life is that of two love stories. The first is Jacob's love for Rachel in Genesis xxix. "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her. And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife." (Gen. xxix. 20, 21.) But the primitive social custom interferes. The ceremony is so strangely performed that only after the marriage is con-

summed is the bride recognizable. Jacob finds to his surprise that he has married Leah, the elder sister of the girl he loves. The parents explain that, according to the custom of their country, a younger daughter cannot be given in marriage before the older ones are married. That undeveloped stage of social life, however, which makes the best impossible does not prevent the higher living alongside the lower. Even in spite of his marriage to Leah, Rachel can be his wife beloved.

An oasis this in the desert of Oriental family life, and the best of it is that it begets a second love story. Father-love is reached at a comparatively late stage in the progress of civilization. It is mother-love that teaches the father to really love his offspring. A man desires that his name perish not from the earth; but close, loving, lifelong companionship between father and son is all too rare even at the present day. The tender beauty of Jacob's love for Joseph is therefore one of the landmarks in the growth of civilization.

Equally interesting are the tendencies making toward more settled life. The first is a beautiful touch. A sad moment comes to Abraham when he must part with his life companion. He purchases the cave of Machpelah in a certain field, and there he buries his dead. Evermore in far-away roamings there is one spot more sacred than all others to the aged patriarch—a spot he owns, a spot which by its associations with his grief in a sense owns him. When Jacob dies in the distant land of Egypt, the old man calls his twelve sons about him. "And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying place. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah

his wife; and there I buried Leah. . . . And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them." (Gen. xlix. 29-31, l. 12.) Joseph leaves the same dying request: "Ye shall carry up my bones from hence." (Gen. l. 25.)

Another factor making for settled life appears. When flocks grow large and population increases, dependence upon the fickle streams of Palestine is rather a precarious existence. Swelling high with winter rains, the scorching sun of summer may dry them up. Wells are consequently dug, and the labor expended upon them impels a sense of personal ownership and attachment. More and more the tribe tends to live near its own wells and to claim the adjacent fields as its own. Instead of moving to fresher fields, it is finally forced to keep its own fields fresh by cultivation.

Yet even at best famine is not infrequent, and it plays a large part in the life of early Palestine. A famine leads to the settlement in Egypt, complete abandonment of the nomadic life being one of the social changes wrought by the struggle for existence. Joseph, whose story is one of the most beautiful and interesting in the world, had through envy been sold into slavery by his brothers and taken to Egypt. Stage by stage he drifts finally to the king's household and becomes the foremost man of the realm. When the great famine occurs, it is by his wisdom that Egypt is saved. Joseph's kindness to the brothers on their coming to Egypt to buy corn results in the removal of the tribe to the country over which he rules.

After his death, however, and the rise of a Pharaoh who knew nothing of Joseph's services to the State (Ex. i. 8), his people are enslaved. Oppression increases, and the sons of the semi-barbarian tribesmen who had roamed so freely through the hills and fields of Palestine not only pay tribute but actually work under the pitiless eye of the taskmaster. So fast do these sturdy sons of the desert increase, however, that prudence demands aggressive

measures. It is strange that in such a case the kings of the earth do not consider how they might win and develop a valuable ally to the highest possibilities of mutual service. As is frequently done to-day, the Egyptians think of how they might best keep their subjects and dependents in such a degree of ignorance and weakness that these dependents and subjects may not become dangerous as enemies. An order is consequently given that every male child be put to death, and Jewish hatred of things Egyptian increases. Then follows the idyllic picture of the birth of Moses, who, growing into young manhood, is educated at Pharaoh's court in all the learning of Egypt. But, being a noble soul, he forgets not the suffering of his mother's people. For a premature and violent espousal of their cause he is forced to flee, and he lives forty years in a foreign land. Here he marries and settles. But away on the mountain his heart goes back to his countrymen in bondage. He longs to see them free. He remembers his mother's stories of the fathers and the easy, free, religious life they led. He learns to love the freedom that is now his; and one day he catches a vision of God, and, moved by the sense of a divine mission, with forty years of growth and wisdom, he goes back to arouse his fellows, preaching the power of Jehovah his God and the necessity of freedom to worship him. He calls them to the same freedom which their fathers enjoyed and bids them remember the places back in Canaan where their fathers slept, in a land flowing with milk and honey. After much effort and much disappointment, the Hebrew people under the leadership of this matchless agitator and lawgiver are marching across the Red Sea into the vast freedom of the desert. Here, too, reading later conditions into a past age has caused trouble. Moses was not leading a forced march to Canaan. It was rather a return to tribal life with a view to a final resettlement in the home of the forefathers and the land of freedom. Speaking of the forty years the children of

Israel consumed in going from Egypt to Palestine, a factious skeptic says: "A betsy bug could make it over sawdust in less time." However that may be, of this we may be sure: If one will get a clear picture of Moses under the conscious leadership of his God, as it is drawn in the book of Exodus, and will meditate on it, he will get something that will make him a better man, that will bring him closer to God.

A tragedy so often enacted in human life closes the history of this remarkable man. Though differing in kind, it is not less beautiful than the idyl of his babyhood or the strong portrait of his maturity. "One soweth and another reapeth." The man who had led the people from the first until now finds that the short span of a single life is not long enough to comprehend both the beginning and the end of so great a movement. The last great task which accomplishes the object of his dreams must be done by another. High on a lonely mountain in the land of Moab, he catches a vision of "all the land of Gilead unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the hinder sea, and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar. And Jehovah said unto him, This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither. So Moses the servant of Jehovah died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of Jehovah. And he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day." (Deut. xxxiv. 1-6.)

"The angels of God upturned the sod  
And laid the dead man there."

In unsettled bodies politic the succession to the leadership is generally occasion for dissension and anarchy. Fortunately, however, Moses had designated his own successor,



and the wisdom of his choice is made manifest. Under the able leadership of Joshua (Josh. i. ff) the Jordan is crossed and the conquest of Canaan begun. This conquest of Canaan is not the thing of a day or even of a generation. The result of the first battles and the division of the territory means only that they had become one of the tribes or tribal confederations of that land. Used to the hardships of wilderness life and the wiles of savage warfare, the Israelites take the mountain fastnesses, but cannot conquer the inhabitants of the lowlands, for they have chariots of iron. In open conflict the higher civilization of the Canaanites can get the better of the cruder methods of the Hebrews, but among the rocks and trees of the mountains their inventions are of little avail.

The tribes are not bound together by a single national bond, and the dawn and growth of a sense of solidarity and brotherhood are one of the interesting phases of the history. When an unusual danger or an exceptionally able leader arises, a small confederacy of several tribes is formed. Sometimes the Israelites are made to pay tribute; sometimes anarchy reigns. They have, however, the memory of a common suffering and deliverance, of a common leader (Moses) whose character they can idealize, and, above all, the bond of a common religion. These are the great unifying forces. And as various leaders appear from time to time in various quarters, the sense of the oneness of the Israelitish people grows. They gradually gain a stronger and stronger foothold in the country until finally a common universal danger completes the work which a common suffering had begun.

The Philistines are threatening to subjugate the entire people. (1 Sam. iv.) Insult is offered the Israelites of Jabesh-gilead by the Ammonites (1 Sam. xi.), and the news of it spreads. The account gives a remarkably fine picture of a call to arms before the invention of the telegraph: "Then

came the messengers to Gibeah of Saul, and spake these words in the ears of the people: and all the people lifted up their voice, and wept. And, behold, Saul came following the oxen out of the field; and Saul said, What aileth the people that they weep? And they told him the words of the men of Jabesh. And the Spirit of God came mightily upon Saul when he heard those words, and his anger was kindled greatly. And he took a yoke of oxen, and cut them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the borders of Israel by the hand of messengers, saying, Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And the dread of Jehovah fell on the people, and they came out as one man." (1 Sam. xi. 4-7.) Victory follows, and the necessity for holding together in order to stand against the Philistines fixes all eyes the more on Saul.

But there is another factor that takes precedence of political conditions in making for national unity. Just before Saul there had arisen one, Samuel, who went from place to place, and who became known as a religious leader of all Israel. It was a people drawn together by a common allegiance to Samuel and Samuel's God that answered so readily the summons of Saul. (1 Sam. iii. 20.)

Saul is anointed king by Samuel, and his increasing powers mark him as the founder of a great dynasty. The popularity and ability of his son Jonathan confirm the hope. But the great king falls a prey to a deep melancholy, and the medicine men recommend music. A lovely shepherd youth of ruddy countenance from the hills of Judah is introduced as court musician. However, he is no mere effeminate boy. As a shepherd he had rescued sheep from lion and bear. When, therefore, according to a not infrequent custom, a Philistine giant challenges the armies of Israel to single combat to decide the issues of battle, this lad David volunteers. Some shudder and some mock at the presumption of the youth. Saul insists on lending his armor, but David has "not proved

it." Out he goes, a free-hearted lad; and choosing a few stones from the brook, while the giant mocks at his size, he puts one into his sling. A deftly thrown stone strikes Goliath in the forehead. He falls, and the Philistines flee.

Saul is not big enough to use David as a right-hand man—to make him a Hebrew Bismarck. His jealousy is aroused when the women sing:

"Saul has slain his thousands,  
But David his ten thousands."

(1 Sam. xviii. 7.)

Persecution follows, and the sympathy of Israel turns more and more to the persecuted musician-hero. Forced to become a bandit and the leader of a group of banditti, David is pursued by Saul as an outlaw; but with the passing days his winsome personality and remarkable wisdom gain him friends. The climax comes when Saul enters for rest into a cave whither David had gone before him for the same purpose. While Saul is asleep David's men urge him to slay his determined foe; but David refuses to lift up his hand against his king, "Jehovah's anointed," and Saul himself sees the remarkable magnanimity which was so fast winning the people to his persecuted rival.

#### QUESTIONS ON THE PROBLEMS OF CHAPTER III.

1. Name in order the leading characters mentioned in this chapter.
2. Locate on your Bible map of the patriarchal times the river Euphrates, Ur of Chaldea, Canaan, Egypt, the Red Sea; on the map of Canaan, each of the twelve tribes, especially Ephraim and Judah.
3. What do you think of the character of Jacob? (Gen. xxvii. 1-36, xxx. 25-43.) What partial explanation do you find in Genesis xxvii. 5? What are the boy's thoughts the first night away from home? (Gen. xxviii. 10ff.) What is his later experience? (Gen. xxxii. 22ff.)
4. What was the character of the Exodus movement? How far was it a religious movement? How far social? a labor strike? How far a political revolution and the founding of a nation? Consider carefully the relative importance of these various phases.

5. What were the circumstances that led to the flight of Moses from Egypt? (Ex. ii. 11f.) Can you give an outline of the general course of his life? If not, see an encyclopedia.

6. Which of the twelve tribes are blamed? which are praised? and which are not mentioned in the poem in the fifth chapter of Judges? Read the marginal references to find out who Machir, mentioned in verse 14, is. To which tribes did Gideon send messengers? (vi. 35.) Consider the local and temporary character of the early confederacies.

7. Who are the leading judges? Whence came Gideon? whence Jephthah? (Judges xi. 6f.) Find these places on the map. Compare Judges v. There were two sections of the tribe of Manasseh, one on each side of the Jordan. Read Judges vi. 24 and ix. 1, find the place mentioned, and determine from which Gideon came. What was likely the part of the Trans-Jordanic tribes in the early history?

8. What is the difference between the character of the work of Samson and that of the other judges? (Judges xiii.-xvi.) Consider the power of a kind of individual outlaw acting as a national champion and making his depredations not upon his own people but upon their enemies. Compare David, who is a leader of a group of banditti rather than a single-handed champion. David claims tribute as a right because he has not plundered Nabal, or perhaps because he has protected Nabal's shepherds from other marauding bands; and his wife calls Nabal a fool for not giving it. Read 1 Samuel xxv. 1ff.

9. Upon what human elements does Gideon depend in his battle? (Judges vii. 9-14, 22.) Compare the Song of Songs. (vi. 4.) Would such an army be counted terrible to-day? But consider the psychic and strategic effect even in modern warfare of making an impression of power.

10. Read in full, beginning with the first mention of the name and closing with the death, omitting any extended passages not about the life, the story of one or more of the following characters: Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Sarah, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson. (Let the teacher assign one or more of these to each student, and, if thought best, have him write out a sketch of the life and character of the one assigned. By noting the chapter and topic headings in the Authorized or American Standard Revised Bible it will not be difficult to see where the life of any of these characters begins or ends.)

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE LATER HISTORY.

#### CHAPTER IV.

*First Day.*—1 Samuel xvi. The shepherd youth. Read Browning's great poem "Saul" if you have time; if not, take time; it will repay you.

*Second Day.*—1 Samuel xviii. 1-16 and 2 Samuel ii. 4-7. Saul and David.

*Third Day.*—2 Samuel xviii. 1-19 and 27-33. The man *versus* the king.

*Fourth Day.*—1 Kings. iii. Solomon's temper and wisdom in judgment.

*Fifth Day.*—1 Kings xi. 26-40 and xii. 1-15. Taxation and oppression result in division.

*Sixth Day.*—2 Kings xxv. The captivity.

*Seventh Day.*—Ezra i. and iii. 1-3. The return.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE LATER HISTORY.

THE purpose of this and the preceding chapter on the Old Testament history is not to write a history of the Hebrews, which would require volumes, but to point out the contents of the historical portion of the Old Testament and the drift of the history in such a way as to furnish an introduction to more detailed study, to indicate how thrilling is that study, and to give a sense of the progress of Israelitish national life. With this in view, the course of the Hebrew people from its origin as an uncivilized nomad tribe to the establishment of the kingdom under the leadership of Saul has been followed.

The founder of a monarchy, however, has a very precarious hold upon the throne. Saul's title had rested on, first, his anointing by Samuel, the head of the powerful prophetic party and representative of Jehovah; and, secondly, the consent or rather the enthusiasm of the people, evoked by his heroism and his services to the State. When Samuel therefore has been alienated and the people have another hero, and especially when the favorite of the people is identical with Samuel's new choice, there is but one course possible. The house of Saul must retire and David must become king.

When war broke out afresh between the Israelites and the Philistines, Saul and Jonathan his son met their foes in the mountain of Gilboa. Jonathan, between whom and David there existed all this time one of the world's ideal friendships, was slain. And "the battle went sore against Saul," and he "took his own sword and fell upon it."

Defeated and without a leader, the eyes of the people turn to the exiled David; but David again shows his wise and magnanimous spirit by refusing to become an "anti-admin-

istration candidate" for the throne. He was of Judah, a tribe which hitherto had had very little in common with the other tribes. In the fifth chapter of Judges, when some tribes are praised for joining the Israelitish confederacy and others are blamed for withholding their strength, Judah is not deemed sufficiently identified with the other tribes to merit even a word of condemnation. And this is typical of the relationship of Judah to the other tribes. The intricacies of political movements are nowhere better illustrated than here. David was not offered the kingship by a well-organized parliament as was Haakon of Norway. At the death of Saul and Jonathan the tribe of Judah, whose interest in the other tribes was comparatively new, looked to David as its natural leader; and it was seven years and six months before all Israel proclaimed David king and successor of Saul. Then follows that remarkable life of statesmanship, the building up of the kingdom which Saul had begun, so that he could hand it over to his son Solomon an empire of peace.

In David the personal element takes precedence of the official. The Bible devotes very little space to the purely personal life of Moses, for example, and the interest centers in his work of founding the nation; but in David the personal interest is never lost, and even in his later life the sorrows of the king of Israel affect us more deeply than the turmoil of his kingdom. Even the greatest political asset of the tribe of Judah is not the purely political work, but the character of David.

The young shepherd boy from the hills of Bethlehem as a court singer under Saul enters the current of world life beautiful, simple, boyish, and manly. The apostle of music in so rude an age, he proves that the shepherd's life which had taught him to pipe to the sheep and to drink in the beauties of sky and field and mountain had given him other training as well. His sheep called not only for piping and for tenderness, but also for protection; and the battles with



the lion and the bear had developed strength and manhood. Thus prepared, he becomes the youthful hero of the nation at the slaying of the giant.<sup>1</sup> Then fleeing the wrath of an envious king, a bandit and an outlaw by necessity rather than choice, he returns to the life which was Abraham's before him. Rising from exile to kingship, he falls into grievous sin, and "grievously doth he answer it." The rebellion and death of his own son bring double grief to the old man's heart, because he knew he had wronged the boy. History knows no more pathetic scene than when runners bearing news of victory are met, not with the question "How fares the army?" but with "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" And when told of his son's fate, the broken-hearted king cries: "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

At the death of David the succession is again insecure; and had Adonijah, who sought to displace the designated heir, Solomon, only delayed his rebellion until after David's death, the entire after history might have been different. Adonijah's premature rebellion is soon put down, and the youthful Solomon, who early wins a reputation for the wisdom of his judicial decisions, is established in the throne of his father. The changes during the life of David were the culmination of the progress of centuries. Through successive stages the Israelites had passed from nomad life to settled slavery in Egypt, then to nomad tribal life again, looking to a final settlement in the land of the forefathers; then from independent settled tribes they passed to local and temporary confederacies under any chance leader during a period of especial danger, till finally the bond of national unity is sealed

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<sup>1</sup>Of course this account accepts the face of the narrative, ignoring the critical questions involved as beyond the scope of the present study.

through the fires of continuous struggles with a neighboring nationality. Facing an organized nation, tribal confederacies cannot be so effective as they had been against older tribal foes, and they consequently pass over under Saul and David into a permanent union; and now they have a settled, peaceful kingdom, and even an empire (unless Solomon himself, as some think, paid tribute to Egypt or Tyre), for the neighboring petty kingdoms owe them allegiance and pay them tribute. Just as an Augustus follows a Julius Cæsar or a Napoleon III. desires to be known as a Napoleon of peace to parallel the first Napoleon's fame as the Napoleon of war, so Solomon, following the warlike David, seeks only to fortify his peaceful empire, and turns his attention to beautifying his capital city. He seeks to match the splendor of luxury and pomp and stone against the glory of the camp and the battle field.

It is a far cry from the roving tribe of Abraham and the unsettled conditions under Joshua to the kingdom of David and Solomon, and steady growth is evident at every stage. The leadership of the army is no longer the sphere of kingly activity. The division of labor hands this over to designated generals, and only the larger oversight falls to the king. Questions of architecture, such as the building of a great palace and a magnificent temple of worship, and questions of literature and music, such as are expressed in psalmody, push to the fore in this age of leisure. The empire extends from Damascus unto the land of the Philistines and the river of Egypt; the government is complex, foreign relations are established, and the ruler lives in luxury.

The close of the sixth and the opening of the seventh chapter of Kings state that Solomon was seven years in building the temple and thirteen years in building his own palace. Many think that he built the temple to provide a gorgeous private chapel for himself rather than to honor his God or to cement the people to Jerusalem by a magnifi-

cent place of worship. In any case the result of his expenditures was a heavy burden of taxation, from which perhaps his own tribe, Judah, was exempt. Even during his reign there was a rebellion led by Jeroboam, and at his death, when his son and successor, Rehoboam, refused to relieve the burden of taxation, Jeroboam renewed his insurrection and succeeded in establishing a second kingdom composed of the northern tribes. Henceforth two nations instead of one lived side by side, often indulging in fratricidal strife and mutual hate.

Jeroboam is variously estimated; but his wisdom in establishing two local sanctuaries, thus bringing the worship close to all the people and rivaling the temple of Solomon not in splendor but by superior convenience, cannot be doubted; and the fact that the people of Israel never turned with longing eyes back to the united kingdom and the house of David is a monument to his power. However, he lacked the personal charm which could make him the perpetual ideal and hero of Israel and which in David so thoroughly bound the hearts of Judah to his house. Unlike David, furthermore, who refused to lift up his hand against Jehovah's anointed, Jeroboam unhesitatingly founded his kingdom on revolt and set a precedent which lessened the sense of the sacredness of the kingship and opened the way for frequent change of dynasty and consequent incessant turmoil in the northern kingdom.

The following is the record of the dynasties and kings of Israel: Jeroboam reigned twenty-two years, being succeeded by his son Nadab, under whom Baasha revolted and established himself as a king. He reigned twenty-four years, but two years after his death Zimri, the captain of half the chariots, assassinated his son Elah and claimed the throne for seven short days. Zimri had planned poorly, not having gotten the backing of the army, who immediately hailed Omri, their general, as king. The house of Omri was per-

haps the greatest of Israel's dynasties, and "the land of the house of Omri" is the usual Assyrian designation of Israel. He was followed by his son Ahab, whose long reign, marked by his own vigor and energy, was chiefly noteworthy for the activities of Elijah. Ahaziah, his son, reigned two years, followed by his brother Joram, whose reign of twelve years ended the dynasty of Omri. Jehu as the champion of Jehovah against the foreign deities introduced by Ahab and his foreign wife, Jezebel, headed a rebellion and established a remarkable dynasty represented by himself, his son Jehoahaz, Jehoash, the powerful Jeroboam II., and Zechariah. But after them came the end through a succession of kings, representing almost as many separate dynasties—Shallum, who reigned one month to fall before Menahem, whose son Pekahiah, after two years, succumbed to the conspiracy of his chief captain, Pekah, the last in turn falling before the conspiracy of Hoshea.

During this period the Empire of Assyria had been gradually becoming more formidable; while Israel, torn by internal dissensions and staining his sword now with the blood of his brother Judah, now with that of his other neighbors, was rapidly being prepared for the final slaughter. During the reigns of Pekah (2 Kings xv. 29) and of Hoshea (xvii. 6) the leading people of Israel were led away captive by the Assyrians, and foreign colonists (xvii. 24) were brought into the land. With this the northern kingdom passes forever off the stage of history, and a mongrel people with a mongrel religion, half Hebrew, half foreign, inhabits the land of Israel.

Things had not been going altogether well meanwhile in the land of Judah; but loyalty to the memory of David and the sense of the sacredness of the king, Jehovah's anointed, kept the Davidic dynasty ever upon the throne. Even when, for example, the people were dissatisfied with the eldest son of Josiah, they chose not the captain of the host (such a

thing, it seems, did not occur to them), but a younger brother to reign in the king's stead. Similarly, when Amaziah (2 Kings xiv. 17f) was slain through conspiracy, "all the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah." The outward history of Judah is very much like that of Israel. The two kingdoms are now at war with each other, now allied against a neighboring nation, now one or the other is attacked by some petty rival or by the powerful empires of Egypt, Assyria, or Babylon. The most noteworthy event of the southern kingdom was perhaps the moral and religious reformation under Josiah which delayed for a while its decline and decay. (2 Kings xxii.f.)

The succession of the kings is as follows: Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Athaliah (the usurping queen), Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah (Azariah), Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah.

The real significance of this succession of dynasties and kings of Israel and Judah is that it forms the setting for the work of the prophets. But for them the lives of the kings would be of no more interest to the world than the petty ups and downs of the kings and armies of Moab and Philistia, and Israel and Judah would be taken into account only by the technical historian who studies the fortunes of the great empires of the East to which they at one time or another acknowledged or refused allegiance. The prophet as preacher of righteousness and expounder of Israel's religion will be discussed later; as a prophet-statesman he demands a few words here, for statesman he was in every sense of the word. The prophetic statecraft assumed two phases: one purely political in its nature as advisers of the kings; the other, since Church and State were one, the regulation of the worship and opposition to the introduction of foreign religions.

As to the former, we have already seen that Samuel was the original king-maker of Israel and the real founder of the monarchy. Later Nahan (1 Kings i. 11f) secured the succession for Solomon at a time when Adonijah, backed by Joab, the chief of the army, and Abiathar, the priest, had it within easy grasp. Ahijah, the prophet of Shiloh (1 Kings xi. 26f), instigated the rebellion of Jeroboam, and it is he who later pronounces Jeroboam's doom (xiv. 7). Elijah stands firmly against royal tyranny in the matter of Naboth's vineyard and resents the introduction of foreign worship by Ahab and Jezebel. Elisha carries out Elijah's policy by instigating a rebellion against the house of Ahab, sending one of his fellow prophets to anoint Jehu king of Israel and champion of Jehovah's religion. (2 Kings ix. 1-3.) Isaiah is preëminently the court prophet and statesman. He urges Ahaz not to call in the aid of Tiglath-pileser of Assyria, and stands always against entangling alliances with foreign nations. Jeremiah counsels submission to Babylon as the only feasible stroke of statecraft as against the restless "false prophets" and princes whose ill-advised revolts brought ruin on their land.

Erelong the fate of Israel overtakes Judah also. Yet not without the thought and hope that it was Jehovah's method of punishing and purifying a nation separate and holy unto himself. It must not be thought that all the Jews were deported nor that life in the captivity was prison life or even slavery such as Israel had suffered in Egypt. The Jewish exiles had their own homes and lands, their own internal organizations, their own prophets and leaders. The house of the prophet Ezekiel seems to have been a frequent rallying place for the elders of Judah (Ezek. viii. 1; xiv. 1; xx. 1), and the whole tenor of his prophecies indicates a very normal life for the exiles. They were likewise in communication with the homeland, where a majority of the people

had remained, in their midst being no less a figure than the prophet Jeremiah.

The exiles continued by the rivers of Babylon, sad at heart and downcast, or entering with avidity into new pursuits. Some of the more devout and patriotic spirits kept alive a longing for the fatherland and the hope of return, and dreamed their nation back into life with the further hope that there should never cease one to sit upon the throne of David. When Cyrus the Persian captured Babylon, he issued a decree allowing the Jews to return and rebuild Jerusalem. It must not be supposed, however, that all the Jews returned. There were several different migrations of returning exiles, yet perhaps the majority remained in Babylon rooted to their new homes and new pursuits.

Into the detailed problems concerning the return it is impossible here to enter. Under the leadership of Zerubbabel, it seems, who was born in Babylon, and of a number of exiles who returned with him there was a revival of interest in Jewish religion and in the temple; under the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah the temple was completed; under Nehemiah the Jewish exclusiveness was fixed and the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt; and under Ezra the ritualistic law was definitely established in Jerusalem. Zerubbabel had been crowned symbolically as king; but the hopes for a new monarchy soon faded, and for only a brief period were the Jews ever again an independent nationality. They began to turn their attention to other things: they had entered the exilic period a nation; they emerged a Church, and with the completion of this process the Old Testament narrative of Hebrew history closes.

#### QUESTIONS ON THE PROBLEMS OF CHAPTER IV.

1. Consider the difference between the enemies of Israel before the age of Saul and David and those of that age. Who were the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the Ammonites? Who were the Philistines?

By the time of Saul there is a well-organized kingdom on the southwest; the chief enemy is no longer a local or marauding tribe.

2. What was the general course of David's life? Compare his life and character with the life and character of Abraham.

3. What were the decisive things in making David the successor of Saul?

4. What was Solomon's purpose, think you, in building the temple? What are your reasons for taking your position?

5. Read the story of Jeroboam and give your estimate of him and the character of his work.

6. What is the place of the prophet as a statesman in the nation?

7. How many separate dynasties had Israel? How many kings? What political conditions does this indicate?

8. Write a two- or three-page sketch of the history of the Hebrews as we have compassed it in these two chapters.



CHAPTER V.  
WORSHIP AND INSTITUTIONS.

## CHAPTER V.

*First Day.*—Genesis xxii. Abraham's faithfulness and the taboo of human sacrifice in Israel.

*Second Day.*—Exodus xi. 1-xii. 14. The perpetual memorial.

*Third Day.*—Exodus xviii. The advancing political order.

*Fourth Day.*—Exodus xx. 1-17 and Deuteronomy v. 6-21. The two versions of the decalogue.

*Fifth Day.*—1 Chronicles xxix. The proposed temple to Israel's God. Psalm lxxxiv. 1-4.

*Sixth Day.*—Haggai i. 1-ii. 9. The second temple not so splendid as the first, but splendor is not all.

*Seventh Day.*—Micah vi. 1-8. The heart of worship.

## CHAPTER V.

### WORSHIP AND INSTITUTIONS.

THE early religious life of Israel stands out against the dark, barbarous background of human sacrifice. Neighboring peoples practiced it even in later times, and the Psalmist laments (Ps. cvi. 35, 37) that his forefathers

"Mingled themselves with the nations, and learned their works:  
Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto demons."

But it was unto Jehovah, not to a foreign god, that Jephthah vowed a vow "and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver the children of Ammon into mine hand, then it shall be, that whosoever [for this is the margin of the Revised Version] cometh forth from the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, it shall be Jehovah's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering." (Judges xi. 30, 31.) The sequel confirms the reading of the margin or at least indicates the fact. As he returned from victory "his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only child." "Alas, my daughter!" cried he, rending his clothes, "thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me, for I have opened my mouth unto Jehovah and I cannot go back." The girl offered herself willingly, and her father "did with her according to his vow which he had vowed." The twenty-second chapter of Genesis, Abraham's offering of Isaac, gives another picture in illustration of this point, where, however, the teaching seems to be that, while Jehovah requires such devotion as would give up an only son for his sake, human sacrifice is to be banished from the religion of Israel.

In captivating bas-relief against this gloom rises the

quaint, buoyant worship of the early Hebrews. There is no organized hierarchy, and, according to early usage, as father and chief Abraham is priest of the household. The primitive sacrifice was a joyous sacred feast. The altar is a very simple, rude affair, of earth or unhewn stone, located near the door of the tent. Everywhere he goes the aged patriarch raises such a temporary shrine under the shadow of the oaks or the calm of a Palestinian sky. Here with a glad heart and free he communes with his God and feels a sense of his care.

Just at the time when the life, and therefore likely the worship as well, was about to become more settled the uprooting of the Exodus came. Again the place of worship must become itinerant. The tribe, however, has increased in size, and the general life is more complex. Instead of a narrative of a quaint family life, a picturesque delineation of a mighty moving tribal worship appears. The people, who live in tents, set apart a large tent for the worship of Jehovah and no longer build a rude altar with every encampment. As the work of civil government has grown more complex, so a separate priesthood presides at the altar. Since the Israelitish code forbids the making of images "of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath," the center of interest in the tabernacle is a sacred chest or ark filled with the presence of Jehovah. It leads the movements of the camp. "And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, O Jehovah, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee. And when it rested, he said, Return, O Jehovah, unto the ten thousands of the thousands of Israel." (Num. x. 35, 36.)

Then comes the magnificent temple and with it an elaborate priesthood and an intricate order of worship with its numerous fasts and feasts, its windows or narrow lights (1

Kings vi. 4), lavers of brass, golden candlesticks, its altar of gold, elaborate ceremonial and multitudinous sacrifices.

The dawn of Hebrew law breaks likewise from the night of primitive savagery, where personal revenge was the only law and the only restraint the fear of retaliation. "If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, Lamech shall be avenged seventy and sevenfold," cries the latter, boasting over his having slain a man who had attacked him and threatening the death of others if they dare disturb his peace. (Revised Version.) The first feeble attempts of man toward law build on animal instinct, and the natural impulse to avenge the death of a son or a father becomes by social custom the duty that the nearest kinsman avenge the death of any relative. It is crude, indeed—a kind of individual lynch law—but it is a step away from early license. And then comes the attempt to guard the evil tendencies of such a rule, for by the law of reaction are human customs and laws perfected. What if the slayer be innocent of evil intent? Therefore, in accordance with a widely spread ancient custom of regarding an altar as a place of refuge, the Mosaic command says, You shall have cities of refuge, whither the slayer may flee that the innocent man may have a chance for his life.

Woman is primitively in a state of slavery, and a man may turn his wife out of doors when he chooses. This is unfair, says the Mosaic law. If a man take a woman from her father's home to turn her and her children out at his pleasure (even as Abraham did Hagar) to suffer hunger and even disgrace is unfair. The wide leap to an indissoluble tie is, however, too far for ancient man to take. But at least the husband must make the divorce a formal act, duly considered and recorded on parchment, not a mere angry whim expressed by word of mouth. (Deut. xxiv. 1.) It was Jesus who explained that "Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives. But from the begin-

ning of the creation, male and female made he them." (Mark x. 5, 6.)

The rise and growth of the English constitution is not more intricate than this dawn of Hebrew law and its development through singular processes to its status in later times, with its sabbatical year, its semisocialistic land laws, its provisions on usury, on judges and witnesses, and even on the social health by means of quarantine against the leper. The culmination of these laws in behalf of the poor and the weak (the proletariat, as our modern economists call them) is the perhaps ill-advised communistic experiment of the Acts. In its desire to care for the poor and the unfortunate and to abolish the inequalities of the social order this experiment was the outcome of the early trend of Hebrew law enforced by the spirit of Jesus. And though the experiment was a failure, its Utopianism is not without that beauty which always attaches to the mind's picture of its own ideals and heavens, and the permanent contribution of Hebrew law to humanity and justice is not without its influence on this day of trust regulation and social reform.

The record of the legal and institutional side of Old Testament life and religion is found chiefly in the so-called priestly element, though no part of the Bible is without its reference to the worship and institutions of Israel. Even when the prophets say, "Bring no more vain oblations," or when the psalmists sing, "The sacrifices of God are a broken and a contrite heart," they are but setting forth a more spiritual view of the worship; and many of the most beautiful Psalms and much of the preaching of the latter prophets center around the temple. The early history records the primitive religious life as well as the general progress of tribal movements, and this same strain continues through Judges, Samuel, and Kings. There are, however, certain books which devote themselves specifically to the worship and laws of Israel. The priestly view of the history is presented, as

has been seen, in Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Ezekiel is the prophet-priest who makes immense contribution to the institutional development and gives an impetus to the temple ceremonies equaled perhaps by that of no other man of Old Testament times. The laws and ceremonies themselves are found in Leviticus and in parts of Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

The heart of all is, of course, the Ten Commandments, which is well called the first Hebrew Canon or "Bible." It served as such, along with certain laws and ceremonies which gathered around it, likely until the completion of the Pentateuch and its canonization as "The Law." There are two versions of the commandments (one in Exodus xx. 1-17, the other in Deuteronomy v. 6-21), differing mainly in the reason given for obeying the fourth commandment and in the order of the clauses in the tenth. The Exodus version hangs the fourth commandment upon the fact that God rested on the seventh day and set it apart as holy. The Deuteronomic version enforces it with a social reason: "That thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou, and thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt." The tenth commandment in Exodus places the wife second in the list of the things not to be coveted; Deuteronomy places the wife first. Some scholars claim that there is still another version to be found, but a discussion of this claim involves questions beyond the scope of our study. In any case, around the "ten words" are built the worship and the moral life of the Old Testament religion, the precepts of which not only are codified here but are constantly enjoined throughout the entire Bible.

The legal books, however—Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy—do not contain moral precepts chiefly (these are found mainly in the wisdom element). They contain rather the regulations for worship and a body of positive laws with legal penalties attached. At the fountainhead

of the later worship is the institution of the Passover in Exodus xii., to which Exodus xxiii. 14-17 adds two other feasts. The twenty-fifth chapter, beginning with the tenth verse, gives instructions concerning the ark, followed by directions concerning the tabernacle in chapter twenty-six and following. Exodus xviii. 13ff recounts the establishment of a body of lower courts at the suggestion of Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, and following the Ten Commandments is a series of judgments or statutes culminating in the remarkable institution of the sabbatical year "that the poor of thy people may eat." (Ex. xxiii. 11.) An analysis of the book is contained in the previous chapter, as is also a discussion of the book of Esther and its account of the origin of the feast of Purim.

The book of Numbers, like Exodus, gives many laws imbedded in the history of the forty years of wilderness life. "The greater part of this legal matter," says Gray, "is very loosely connected with the narrative and deals with a variety of matters." The offerings enjoined in the fifteenth chapter and the Levitical cities and cities of refuge in the thirty-fifth may be cited not so much as typical of the book but as illustrations of its variety.

Leviticus is a book of laws rather than a history in which laws are imbedded or to which they are appended. The purpose of the history therein contained is to emphasize the majesty of the law. The general divisions of the book are as follows: Chapters i. to xvi., general laws of sacrifices and of the clean and unclean, closing with the institution of the day of atonement. Next comes the law of holiness, culminating, like Exodus judgments, in the institution of the sabbatical year and of the year of jubilee, to which chapter xxvi. adds practical injunctions concerning the results of obedience or disobedience to this law. Chapter xxvii. is a supplemental discourse on vows and dues. This outline follows Dr. Kellogg on Leviticus in the Expositor's Bible,



but does not differ materially from that given by other scholars.

One of the epoch-making books of the world's history is Deuteronomy. The name comes through the Greek Septuagint, and according to Driver in his "Commentary on Deuteronomy," though based on a grammatical error, is not inappropriate, for it "does embody the terms of a second legislative covenant and includes (by the side of much fresh matter) a repetition of the laws contained in what is sometimes called the 'first legislation of Exodus.'" The book opens with a historical introduction and closes with two long poems and an account of the death of Moses. The main body of the book is three Mosaic discourses imbedded in short historical statements.

The chief significance of Deuteronomy is its relation to the temple at Jerusalem and the centralization of the worship. The importance of the temple to the history of Israel's religious life cannot be overestimated. Bishop Candler has well said that when the Israelites roamed the wilderness and dwelt in tents they could worship God in a tent; but when they were settled in Canaan and had houses of their own, the cedars of Lebanon and the gold of Ophir were laid under tribute for the house of God. The temple gave center to Israel's religious life; it was the opening wedge in driving out idolatry and in preserving the Mosaic ideals concerning the worship of one God, though it was also the occasion for the later overemphasizing of ceremonial as was the synagogue for the overemphasizing of puritanic law. As we have seen, prophets prophesy concerning it, psalmists sing of it, and exiles look toward it with longing and prayer. The temple came to its dominant place more through the discovery of the book of the law in the reign of Josiah than through any other source. This book of the law was or contained undoubtedly Deuteronomy, and it was a reformation based upon Deuteronomic law that

revolutionized the religious life and worship of Israel. It made the temple the center of all; it struck the fatal blow to the local shrines where idolatry lingered and where foreign worship might easily wedge itself in. It made every Israelitish home (Deut. iv. 10; vi. 6-9) a school of Israel's religion, it inculcated and enforced the highest loyalty and love for Jehovah, and it shares with Leviticus in summing up the moral law in the two commandments on which Jesus says hang all the law and the prophets: "Thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut. vi. 5); and "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Lev. xix. 18).

#### QUESTIONS ON THE PROBLEMS OF CHAPTER V.

1. Read the story of Abraham's offering of Isaac. What is your explanation of the incident and its evident difficulties? Was it a direct command of God or Abraham's interpretation, in the light of the common practice, of God's demand for absolute consecration? What of God's giving such a command, and of the obligation to comply? Think the matter through and *get your own opinion*.

2. What was the ark, its character, and its history? See Concordance on the word "ark."

3. To what class of society does the Hebrew law pay particular attention?

4. What books treat of the Old Testament worship? What historical books are written from the legal or priestly viewpoint?

5. Read and compare the commandments as given in Exodus and Deuteronomy respectively. What do you think of the differences? Is there a reason for them or not?

6. What is the chief significance of Deuteronomy? Read the account of the reformation under Josiah. (2 Kings xxii., xxiii.) If the book of the law was Deuteronomy, what is your estimate of its importance to Jewish history?

7. What was the political and what the religious significance of having one central temple?

8. Read Exodus xxi. and xxii. to get an idea of the character of the Hebrew legal codes.

9. What are the general differences between the books of Leviticus and Numbers?

CHAPTER VI.  
THE OLD TESTAMENT POETRY.

## CHAPTER VI.

*First Day.*—Exodus xv.

*Second Day.*—Psalms xxxii and li. Penitential Psalms.

*Third Day.*—Psalm xix. God's world and God's law.

*Fourth Day.*—Psalms xxiii. and xxiv. Contrast fully these two Psalms.

*Fifth Day.*—Job xxxviii. i-xxxix. 10.

*Sixth Day.*—Psalms lxxvi. and lxxxv. Two songs of deliverance—one from a present foe and one from a long captivity.

*Seventh Day.*—Psalms ciii. and cl. Two types of thanksgiving and praise. Study out, contrast, and get the spirit of each.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE OLD TESTAMENT POETRY.

THE earliest attempts at literature among all peoples tend to take the poetic form, for men become interested in beauty of expression even before they learn to love formal history. The first expression of a child's religious life is:

"Now I lay me down to sleep;  
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep."

The beauty of the little prayer learned at mother's knee haunts the graybeard to the verge of life's end, and a nation's highest flights in her Homers, Dantes, and Miltons show how persistent is this love of the beautiful as it expresses itself in verse.

"Nearer, My God, to Thee," by a Unitarian, and "Lead, Kindly Light, amid the Encircling Gloom," by the greatest Catholic priest of the last century, indicate further how every phase of our modern religious life seeks poetic expression. "Poetry," says Matthew Arnold, "is nothing less than the most perfect speech of man." If this be true, then Israel's poetry is the most perfect expression of the religious nature of man. "How meager an idea," says Kirkpatrick in his commentary on the Psalms, "of the higher religious life of Israel should we derive from the historical books apart from the prophets! How imperfect still would be the picture drawn from the historical books and the prophets without the warmth of coloring added to it by the Psalms! These alone give us a glimpse into the inner religion of the best spirits in the nation."

The form of Hebrew poetry is peculiar, and on account of this singularity in form many have read the Bible over and over without recognizing its poetry. The most of our

modern poetry makes use of rhyme, and the "I am a poet, but I didn't know it" which frequently follows chance rhyme of ordinary conversation shows how closely the popular mind associates rhyme with poetry. A little thought, however, will indicate that the greatest poetry of even the English language is the blank verse of Milton and Shakespeare, while the stately verse of the Greeks is likewise without rhyme. With the possible exception of some folk poems, which with the analysis of the poetic books will for convenience be discussed in the chapter on the wisdom element, the Hebrews used neither blank verse nor rhyme, yet their poetic form is no less real than ours. It consists of parallelism, of which there are three kinds:

1. Synonymous parallelism, where a second line repeats in other words the thought of the first:

"The heavens declare the glory of God;  
And the firmament showeth his handiwork."<sup>1</sup> (Ps. xix. 1.)

2. Antithetic parallelism, in which the second member is in contrast with the thought of the first:

"For the arms of the wicked shall be broken;  
But the LORD upholdeth the righteous."  
(Ps. xxxvii. 17.)

3. Synthetic parallelism, where the second member completes the thought of the first:

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks,  
So panteth my soul after thee, O God." (Ps. xlii. 1.)

Sometimes, too, a more intricate form is found where, for

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<sup>1</sup>Quotations in this chapter, with a few slight changes, are from the English Revised Version, and not the American Standard as elsewhere. This is because the latter sacrifices poetry and devotion to accuracy, especially in the use of "Jehovah" and particularly in the more familiar passages.

example, the sense of two synonymous lines are completed by two other synonymous or antithetic parallelisms:

"The Lord is my strength and my shield;  
My heart hath trusted in him, and I am helped;  
Therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth;  
And with my song will I praise him." (Ps. xxviii. 7.)

The earliest written portions of the Bible are poems. The story of Lamech quotes from a poem which upon any theory must be much older than the narrative. Or again, the history of Joshua's conquest of Canaan quotes a little poem from the book of Jashar:

"Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon;  
And thou, Moon, in the valley of Aijalon."

With both of these we are already familiar. Wherever a poem is found imbedded in prose, the poem is usually much older, for writers of prose narratives do not often burst into a poetic strain of their own.

The Bible poetry is of the various kinds found in any literature; and, in spite of the usual loss in translation, its beauty and power are manifest. Sometimes strains of martial strength celebrate a great victory.

"I will sing unto the LORD," exultantly cries the victorious Israelite:

"I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously:  
The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.  
The LORD is my strength and song,  
And he is become my salvation:  
This is my God, and I will praise him;  
My father's God, and I will exalt him." (Ex. xv. 1, 2.)

Or again a triumphant song of more deep-subdued gratitude appears. During the early years of the settlement in Canaan unfortunate conditions had prevailed. Foreign tribes were in the ascendancy, and instead of a few robbers infesting the bypaths and falling now and then upon travelers along the highways the situation was reversed:

"In the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied,  
And the travelers walked through byways."

But under the inspiration of the prophetess Deborah victory is won, and they sing:

"For that the leaders took the lead in Israel,  
For that the people offered themselves willingly,  
Bless ye the Lord! . . .  
Lord, when thou wentest forth out of Seir,  
When thou marchest out of the field of Edom. . . .  
The mountains flowed down at the presence of the Lord,  
Even yon Sinai at the presence of the Lord, the God of Israel.

. . . . .

Far from the noise of the archers, in the places of drawing water  
There shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord.

Awake, awake, Deborah;

Awake, awake, utter a song:

Arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam."

And then, after praising by name some of the tribes who "jeopardied their lives unto the death," the poet turns to chiding those who did not come "to the help of the Lord against the mighty:"

"By the watercourses of Reuben  
There were great resolves of heart.  
Why satest thou among thy sheepfolds,  
To hear the pipings for the flocks?  
At the watercourses of Reuben  
There were great searchings of heart.  
Gilead abode beyond the Jordan,  
And Dan, why did he remain in ships?  
Asher sat still at the haven of the sea,  
And abode by his creeks."

Sometimes the "Marseillaise" and the song of thanksgiving both are hushed and the weird beauty of a dirge is heard. A devout spirit bewails the desolation of Zion as in the book of Lamentations, or Saul and Jonathan fall in battle, the Philistines triumph (2 Sam. i. 19), and David mourns:



"Thy glory, O Israel, is slain upon thy high places!  
How are the mighty fallen!  
Tell it not in Gath,  
Publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon:  
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,  
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph."

And then the personal (as so often with David) swallows up the kingly, and he wails:

"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: . . .  
Thy love to me was wonderful,  
Passing a woman's love."

Again, with the tender longing of a breaking heart, an exiled singer sings:

"By the rivers of Babylon,  
There we sat down, yea, we wept,  
When we remembered Zion.  
Upon the willows in the midst thereof  
We hanged up our harps." (Ps. cxxxvii.)

Not in songs of patriotism, however, whether dirges or peans of victory, is Israel at her best; nor yet in the idyllic loveliness of such poetic prose as the stories of Ruth and Esther or of such poetry as the Song of Songs. These are worthy of a place beside the best of their kind in any language, but in her religious lyrics lies Israel's most unique poetic power. Praising the greatness of God's creative power, the twenty-fourth Psalm declares:

"The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof;  
The world, and they that dwell therein.  
For he hath founded it upon the seas,  
And established it upon the floods."

Or, asserting the marvelous tenderness of God's thoughtful care, the universal favorite affirms:

"The Lord is my shepherd;  
I shall not want.  
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:  
He leadeth me beside the still waters."

Often the Psalmist rises to an ecstatic anthem of praise, as in the Hallelujah Psalms (for example, Psalm cl.), which become the model for this type of the world's poetry and music. Sometimes is heard the pathetic cry of a sin-sick soul:

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness:  
According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my  
transgressions. . . .

For thou delightest not in sacrifice; else would I give it:

Thou hast no pleasure in burnt offering.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:

A broken and a contrite heart,

O God, thou wilt not despise." (Ps. li.)

Frequently again the healed heart that was broken tells of its tranquil joy:

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven,  
Whose sin is covered." (Ps. xxxii. 1.)

One does not usually think of love songs in the Bible. Because of the shock of such a thought, old interpreters saw in the Song of Songs descriptions of the Virgin Mary or read into it fanciful conceptions of the Church as the bride of Christ, making the book unintelligible and enigmatical. When read as an exquisite pastoral love poem in protest against a polygamous social order, it becomes beautiful in itself and still more beautiful in its rising above the age of the "hardness of men's hearts" toward the ideal of marriage which Jesus set forth.

Some of the Oriental imagery so difficult for us to appreciate was easy and natural in its own age, but its deeper beauty runs through every love song of every age and clime.

A country lass loves with a strong, true love a shepherd lad, whose love to her is better than wine. The king takes her as one of his wives, but she pines for her absent lover:

"Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth,  
Where thou feedest thy flock,  
Where thou makest it to rest at noon." (S. S. i. 7.)

And he dreams of her from his far-away fields:

“As a lily among thorns,  
So is my love among the daughters.” (S. S. ii. 2.)

Through the fragrant springtime comes the sentiment of the often-quoted lines of “Locksley Hall:”

“Rise up,” the voice says to her,  
“Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away,  
For, lo, the winter is past,  
The rain is over and gone;  
The flowers appear on the earth;  
The time of the singing of birds is come,  
And the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land.”  
(S. S. ii. 10f.)

All Solomon’s efforts to woo her are in vain. She says:

“I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved,  
That ye tell him that I am sick of love.” (S. S. v. 8.)

“What is thy beloved more than another beloved?” they ask. She tells of his graces and attractions, but the essence of all is:

“I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine;  
He feedeth his flock among the lilies.” (S. S. vi. 3.)

The message of the book is not less applicable in our own age, when men and women still marry and are given in marriage for money and titles, than in the age of polygamy. The affections cannot be controlled; they come like the breath of spring, and love, when it is come, is worth all:

“I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,  
By the roes, or by the hinds of the field,  
That ye stir not up, nor awake love,  
Until it please.” (S. S. ii. 7; iii. 5.)

“For love is as strong as death.”  
“Many waters cannot quench love,  
Neither can the floods drown it:  
If a man would give all the substance of his house for love,  
He would utterly be contemned.” (S. S. viii. 6f.)

The Old Testament in those polygamous times would have been incomplete without this clear-cut protest, filled with Oriental imagery, it is true, but nevertheless striking a universal note of the human heart and amounting to a revelation from God on the social side of human life.

There remains still the majestic epic, and the Bible furnishes this as well. The first chapter of Genesis seems to be a prose paraphrase of an older poem of creation. Traces of its parallelism may be seen:

"And the earth was desolation and a waste,  
And darkness upon the faces of the deep." (Gen. i. 2.)

The strophic arrangement is marked by refrains:

"And there was evening,  
And there was morning, one day."  
"And God saw that it was good."

But the great epic of the Bible is the book of Job. Unbiased literary critics count it among the world's greatest poems. Philosophic in cast and dramatic in form, though not in action, it is, above all, epic. An epic is a narrative heroic poem in the grand style. In Homer the gods appear on the battle field or in council with the heroes of early Greece. The hero of the Bible epic is one who in the privacy of his own soul fights out the deepest problem of human life, and the God who appears upon the scene is the Almighty himself. The aim of "Paradise Lost" is to "justify the ways of God to men." The theme of the Job poem is: "Why do I suffer, being innocent?" The book has passages which to the Christian world are full of tender beauty and pathos, as (iii. 17):

"There the wicked cease from troubling;  
And there the weary be at rest."

But this is not its real tone. It is but a heart full of stormy questionings expressing its modicum of comfort. The weird figure seated on the ash heap or garbage pile just

outside the city's gate is cursing the day of his birth. His thoughts and words are of "sterner stuff" (Job iii. 4, 5):

"Let that day be darkness;  
Let not God regard it from above,  
Neither let the light shine upon it.  
Let darkness and the shadow of death claim it for their own."

A glance at the Revised Version will show that the book begins with a prose introduction and closes with a short prose epilogue. The poem proper opens with the picture of the man on the ash heap. He and his friends discuss the great problem of suffering, concrete in his own case. When Job and his friends have had their say, God out of the whirlwind sets at naught the cavilings of men in words of majestic sweep (Job xxxviii., xxxix., *passim*):

"Who is this that darkeneth counsel  
By words without knowledge?  
Gird up now thy loins like a man;  
For I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.  
Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?  
.  
Or who laid the corner stone thereof;  
When the morning stars sang together,  
And all the sons of God shouted for joy?  
.  
Canst thou bind the cluster of the Pleiades,  
Or loose the bands of Orion?  
.  
Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth?  
Or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?  
.  
Who hath sent out the wild ass free?  
Or who hath loosed his bands?  
Whose house I have made the wilderness,  
And the salt land his dwelling place.  
Who scorneth the city's noise,  
Nor heareth the driver's shout.  
The range of the mountains is his pasture,  
And he searcheth the green thing thereof.

Will the wild ox be content to serve thee?  
Or will he abide by thy crib?

Doth the hawk soar by thy wisdom,  
And stretch her wings toward the South?"

"Who is this that hideth counsel without knowledge?" you ask. "It is I," Job cried (xlii. 3):

"I have uttered that which I understood not,  
Things beyond my ken;  
I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear;  
But now mine eye seeth thee.  
Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent  
In dust and ashes."

The man has caught a vision of God, he is satisfied, and the Bible's epic poem closes.

#### QUESTIONS ON THE PROBLEMS OF CHAPTER VI.

1. How many poems are imbedded in the pages of the historical books? Turn the pages of your Revised Version, noting what proportion are found in prophetic and priestly books respectively.
2. What is usually the relative age of poems and the narrative in which they are imbedded? How would you apply this to the poems you have noticed? How much older are the various poems to be found in Genesis than the remainder of the narrative, would you say?
3. What are the various kinds of parallelism? Classify the parallelism of the following: Psalm lxxix.; vii. 1-5; Proverbs xxiii. 1-6; xii. 12; xx. 1-3; your three favorite Psalms, two other Psalms, and two poems imbedded in prose.
4. Judging from the internal evidence, when and where was Psalm cxxxvii. written?
5. Consider the difference between a psalm of calm thankfulness, like Psalm ciii., and a hallelujah song like Psalms cxlvi. to clx.
6. What is the message of the Song of Songs? What is the value of its message compared with that of other books?
7. What is the book of Job as to literary character.
8. Tell the story in prose of any three Psalms. Find their natural divisions (thus Psalm xix. has two main divisions: verses 1-6, God's creation; 7-14, God's law), their parallelism and combinations of parallelisms, and give your estimate of them as poetry and literature and as a religious stimulus.
9. Block out the poetic arrangement of Genesis i.

CHAPTER VII.  
THE EARLIER PROPHETS.

## CHAPTER VII.

*First Day.*—1 Kings xix. 1-14 and xxi. 1-23.

*Second Day.*—In the light of the summary of Amos i. 1-ii. 8, read Amos ii. 9-iii. 2.

*Third Day.*—Hosea i. and iii.

*Fourth Day.*—Hosea xiv.

*Fifth Day.*—Isaiah vi.

*Sixth Day.*—Isaiah xxx. 1-18.

*Seventh Day.*—Isaiah xxxv.



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE EARLIER PROPHETS.

FROM the standpoint of literary style alone the Old Testament prophets demand a place beside the masters of the world's literature. Their sermons are often pure poetry. The variations in the styles of different prophets too are no less real and noticeable than the difference between the chaste simplicity of Addison and the flowing diction of Macaulay.

"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for Jehovah hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. . . . Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. i. 2, 3, and 18.) Contrast the beauty of this tender appeal from Isaiah with the rugged strength of a few words from Amos ii. 6: "Thus saith Jehovah, For three transgressions of Israel, yea, for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have sold the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes." Then comes the apocalyptic style of Ezekiel i. 4, 28, and ii. 1: "And I looked, and, behold, a stormy wind came out of the north, a great cloud, with a fire infolding itself, and a brightness round about it, and out of the midst thereof as it were glowing metal, out of the midst of the fire." "This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake. And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak with thee."

The world has missed the power of the prophetic books

for the same reason that it has so frequently missed that of other portions of the Bible. As the most beautiful Psalms have been looked upon as proof texts, so the prophets have been searched, not for their messages to men, but to prove that they knew what was going to happen hundreds of years before it came to pass.

The prophet, as the world is realizing more and more, was not predominantly a "predicter," but a preacher. And even his predictions were not of the disinterested, clairvoyant, fortune-telling kind. Jesus gives the pith and point of all their foretellings when he says: "Many prophets and righteous men have longed to see the things which ye see, but have not seen them." When they looked beyond the bounds of their own age, it was with an intense longing—a travailing hope. They called the people to take courage; there was something to live for. On the other hand, they declared that if Israel lived a life of sin and of indifference to God there was everything to lose, there was much to suffer.

The word "prophet" is from the Greek verb *φημί* (*phēmi*), "to say," and the preposition *πρό* (*pro*), meaning "before," and referring ordinarily to either time or place. *Πρόφημι* (*prophēmi*) may from its composition, therefore, mean either to speak before the time of occurrence of an event or to speak before an audience or before (in front of) another in order to defend him; in other words, for example, to speak beforehand, to speak forth, or to speak in defense of or in behalf of. A prophet, then, may be from the derivation of the word either one who speaks beforehand or one who speaks forth. As a matter of fact, the Greek word is used to represent a Hebrew word of the latter signification, while our English translation and misinterpretation have fixed the former meaning upon the popular mind. To understand the prophets, therefore, one must divest one's mind of this popular conception and picture to himself one who speaks forth—a preacher of righteousness and of a coming

Messianic kingdom in which righteousness and peace shall kiss each other.

No national portrait gallery can show more interesting variety than the Bible's portraiture of these preachers of righteousness nor greater single pictures than its representation of the greatest of them. Already a glimpse of the gigantic Moses, lawgiver as well as prophet, has been caught. The early history of Israelitish prophecy reveals a background scarcely less dark than the background of its worship. This persists to later times and calls forth constant denunciation upon witches and false prophets. Saul inquires of the witch of Endor; and it is perhaps because he flies into an ecstatic fit, not because he rises to heights of prophetic grandeur, that the proverb circulates: "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

In the midst of prophets of this type the patriarchal figure of the aged Samuel, a prophet of all Israel, appears. His powers of religious leadership as he went from one sacred place to another preaching Israel's common God, and the popular reverence for his familiar face sealed the unity of the tribes. If Saul and David were the kings, Samuel was the kingmaker and the wielder of the same kind of subtle personal influence which made David mean so much to the tribe of Judah for succeeding centuries. Equally as fine is the picture when the prophet is politically subordinate. Samuel was kingmaker, or rather king creator. There was a kind of fatherly interest in his rebuke of Saul, whom he had anointed king and whose very office he had created: "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? . . . Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (1 Sam. xv. 14, 22.)

Nathan, however, was only a court prophet whose office depended on the will of the monarch. His position was totally the reverse of Samuel's. David had become the practical

murderer of Uriah, whose wife he had taken as his own. "There were two men in one city," said the prophet to David one day; "the one rich, the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveler unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him, but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him." David listened to Nathan's well-told story, and his anger was kindled. "As Jehovah liveth," said he, "the man that hath done this is worthy to die." With superb courage, Nathan, looking into the eye of his liege lord and king, said calmly: "Thou art the man." The shaft went home. "I have sinned," was David's answer. (2 Sam. xii. iff.) The world affords no more keen, adroit courage than this of Nathan's.

From him we turn to a strange, weird figure under a juniper tree, a giant of denunciation, feared yet afraid, who finds God not in the tempest nor in the earthquake but in the still small voice, and who goes down in Jewish thought beside Moses, in Christian thinking beside that strange, wildly clad preacher of the Jordan Valley who flourished about nine centuries later, John the Baptist.

Study the interesting outlines of Elijah's career or that of the sturdy Amos and contrast it with the quiet, forgiving spirit of Hosea. "Our sweetest songs," says Shelley, "are they that tell of saddest thought." Hosea's is a home wrecked by a shameless wife. And how the broken heart of the husband follows the false wife through all her sin to love her back from a life of shame!

Looking again, Isaiah, a court prophet of Jerusalem,

honored of men and living a life of influence in the kingdom of his day, greets us; or still again, and the cords are lowering the true and valiant Jeremiah into a dungeon because he dared speak the truth as God gave him to see it.

But more beautiful than the outward lives of these men is the subtle working of God's revelation of himself, of which they were in part the agents. As the kingdom of life is above the kingdom of death, as the beauty of a flower is greater than the beauty of a stone, and as movement or action in a painting sheds a subtle influence over it, so does the beauty of growth and life and action mark the progress of God's revelation of himself to men. Until recently the world thought that history meant the records of battles and parliaments and the lists of kings. But our age is gradually learning that there are as many phases of history as there are of human life. This shall grow more evident until what is now called history shall be deemed as much a part of the science of government and politics as the history of music now is a part of the general subject of music. If the dramatic movement of national life is of interest, how much more to one who sees is the subtler movement of things that more intimately affect the hearts and lives of men. Thus Lecky writes a "History of European Morals;" Green calls his work the "History of the English People" and spends much of his time in telling of their literature and their social and religious life; and histories of philosophy, histories of theology, and histories of religions abound; but if there is one phase of history more interesting than all others, it is the story of the progress of God's revelation of himself to man. And wherever else that may be found—in the book of nature or in the book of human experience—it is manifest in the Bible.

Moses impresses this thought upon the children of Israel: Jehovah is your God, and as your God you must be loyal to him. Other nations may worship their own, but you owe

them nothing: Jehovah is your God, him have ye chosen to serve, and he it is who led you up from the house of bondage to the land of promise. Be loyal to him." (Cf. Ex. xx. 1f, etc.)

Then comes Elijah with his message. Baal had been striving with Jehovah for mastery, and under the leadership of Ahab and Jezebel the injunction of Moses was breaking down. It was a time of much questioning. "If we can win the favor of two gods," thought the Israelites, "shall we not have more chances for prosperity than if we have only one on our side?" "But how can that be?" cries Elijah. "One or the other is God: and you but lose the favor of the God by fawning before another God. Then judge for yourselves. If Jehovah be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." (1 Kings xviii. 21.) Perhaps at few times has the world passed a more serious crisis in the cause of spiritual religion; and Elijah, almost single-handed, wins the fight.

But this very thought of Jehovah's supremacy, coupled with his choice of Israel, brings its dangers. If he be on their side, then all is well, and they make it a business to obtain his favor by frequent sacrifice. But they forget that Jehovah requires a moral life. Such being the current of thought, Amos, a sturdy herdsman from Tekoa, suddenly appears at a great Israelitish feast. His address is a masterpiece of diplomatic oratory.<sup>1</sup> He tells of woes about to befall Damascus and Tyre and Ammon and Moab, welcome news to Israel, and one can imagine with what eager approval the people hear their enemies denounced. Perhaps most say "Bravo!" even when he strikes the

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<sup>1</sup>Some think that these opening chapters were never spoken but were written as an introduction to his spoken addresses. Some claim that parts of chapters i. and ii., especially the reference to Judah, are later interpolations, but our study takes the face of the record without considering these questions. In any case they illustrate in general the method and style of Amos.

brother kingdom of Judah, against which Israel has some old scores; but a few wise heads shake doubtfully and wonder where the next blow will fall. Yes, it is as they had surmised: "Thou art the man." There follows the strong passage quoted previously concerning the transgressions of Israel (Amos ii. 6): "They have sold the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes." "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." Therefore think you I shall deal gently with you and not punish you? Nay, rather, "therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities" (Amos iii. 2), for your superior blessings bring superior responsibilities. Do you think Jehovah can be bribed by burnt offerings? With magnificent irony Amos answers: "Come to Bethel, and transgress; to Gilgal, and multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes every three days; and offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving of that which is leavened, and proclaim freewill offerings and publish them: for this pleaseth you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord God." (Amos iv. 4, 5.) But that is not the way to win the favor of Jehovah. He declares: "Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live; and so Jehovah, the God of hosts, will be with you, as ye say. Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish justice in the gate." (Amos v. 14, 15.)

Nothing can be more magnificent than the powerful message of this unique preacher. God is a just God and requires just dealing between man and man. And with his message Israel takes higher ground, and through him God has added this further revelation of his character and nature. The book of Amos gives his addresses and all we know of his life.

From the sad personal life of another prophet of this period comes a widely different but complementary message. He tells his story and preaches his message in the book that bears his name. The first three chapters tell his sad experience and apply it to Jehovah's relations with his people. Chapters iv.-xiv. give in broken, fragmentary prophecies

his moanings over Israel's sin and God's tender, pleading call to repentance. "If I can love a woman who tramples on all my love and on every thought of purity and faithfulness, shall the great God above be less tender toward his wayward people?" thought Hosea. Yes, they have forgotten him, they have worshiped idols, they have lived wickedly; but he loves them still, and the prophet, speaking from God's revelation in and through his own deep sorrow, can give the welcome invitation: "O Israel, return unto Jehovah thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and return unto Jehovah: say unto him, Take away all iniquity. . . . Neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy." (Hos. xiv. 1-3.) He can assure them too of God's answer: "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the grain and blossom as the vine." On the manward side, just as Amos declares that justice is better than sacrifice, Hosea goes a step farther. "I desire goodness, and not sacrifice" (vi. 6), he says, speaking as the mouth-piece of Jehovah.

Then comes Isaiah, who, building on the work of his predecessors, lays another stone. His initial religious experience strikes a keynote. He is one of those men with whom, like Paul, Augustine, Bunyan, and Tolstoi, the sense of personal sin is deep and crushing. "Woe is me!" he exclaims; "for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." From the background of such a temperament his temple vision appears: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his



train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, "Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the foundations of the thresholds were moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke." (Isa. vi. 1f.) It is not strange, therefore, that to Isaiah God is the Holy One of Israel, and that men look back to him as the human agent through whom the holiness of God was revealed to the world.

The book of Isaiah comes to a sudden break at the opening of chapter xl. The section immediately preceding, chapters xxxvi.-xxxix., is historical—though by no means unprophetic—in character, and separates the main divisions of the prophecies of the book. The first main division contains in chapters i.-xii. and xxviii.-xxxiii. prophecies concerning Judah, Jerusalem, and Israel, and in chapters xiii.-xxiii. prophecies concerning foreign nations. Chapters xxiv.-xxvii. predict a general judgment and a restoration of God's people, and chapters xxxiv. and xxxv. follow in somewhat kindred strain and conclude the division.

The second main division falls into two sections, with the close of chapter lv. as a division point. The first section tells of Jehovah's use of Cyrus the Persian as the one anointed (Hebrew, *messiah*) to accomplish the restoration of his people and closes with those wonderful chapters on the servant of Jehovah. The latter section, chapters lv.-lxvi., prophecies "the future blessedness of the true Israel contrasted with the doom of the apostates."

It was fitting that the messages of Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah should be gathered together by Isaiah's contemporary, Micah, in one of the greatest sentences in the world's literature: "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

This book may be divided into two parts, at the opening of chapter vi., or in general into three parts, as follows: Chapters i.-iii., presenting the evil condition of the nation; chapters iv. and v., the hope for the future; chapters vi. and vii., the solution of the problem.

These four men (unless perhaps the date of Joel may be earlier) are the early prophets whose writings have come down to us. Of course the classification "Minor Prophets" depends not upon the greatness of the men but on the length of their books. Amos and Hosea, as well as Isaiah, are among the world's gigantic characters. About their time a great economic revolution was sweeping over Israel. The small farms were passing out of the hands of the ancestral owners, and the rich were buying up all the land. "Woe unto them," cries Isaiah, "that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no room." (Isa. v. 8.) "Woe unto them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds!" says Micah. "When the morning is light, they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand." Then he explains the iniquity which he is deploring: "They covet fields, and seize them; and houses, and take them away: and they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage." (Mic. ii. 1, 2.)

Elijah and Hosea start from a deep repulsion at religious apostasy, though they are not unmindful of relations between man and man; Amos from horror over the oppression practiced by those who are not altogether remiss concerning certain religious duties as they conceived them. Isaiah and Micah, though deeply influenced by Hosea, are impelled by the economic revolution to enforce especially the message of Amos. One might almost think that they had modern conditions in mind, so similar on a broader scale has been the economic revolution of the last three-quarters of a century.

These five (including, of course, the whole book of Isaiah, however the question of the authorship of certain parts may

be decided), with Moses and Jeremiah, are God's choicest instruments in giving to the world the foundations of religion. All that is needed further is development under the later prophets until the time is ripe for the coming of Him who was to fulfill and complete all.

#### QUESTIONS ON THE PROBLEMS OF CHAPTER VII.

1. Sketching 2 Kings ii-ix., how would you compare Elijah and Elisha? What were the latter's works? Was there any crisis when the tide of religious life and thought was turned by him as is related of Elijah at Carmel, or was his influence largely personal? The "double portion of thy spirit" of 2 Kings ii. 9 does not mean twice as much as you have, but the eldest son's double share of the inheritance. What, then, is Elisha's significance?

2. Reading 1 Kings xxi., how would you compare Elijah and Nathan in their rebukes of their respective kings? What was David's general character? What Ahab's? What was Nathan's relation to David? What Elijah's to Ahab? What was the character and effect of the respective rebukes?

3. What is said of the literary power of the prophets? What was the prophet's chief work? How was Aaron (Ex. vii. 1-12) to be a prophet for Moses?

4. What were the respective chief contributions of the prophets named in this chapter? How do these messages accord with the character and experience of the man in each case?

5. Consider the two phases of Elijah's work: champion of God and religion and champion of man—of the people and of social morality. How far is this typical of the attitude of all the prophets? What is the significance on this point of the two distinct divisions of the Ten Commandments, hanging as they do on the prelude of Exodus xx. 2?

6. What is the attitude of the earlier prophets toward the customary worship? (Hos. vi. 6; Amos iv. 4, 5.) Note the telling irony. (Isa. i. iiff.)

7. Note Micah's arraignment of his age by reading consecutively the following: The rich (ii. 1, 2); the rulers (iii. 1-3 and 9-11a, the natural result of the greed of consolidated wealth); the Church (iii. 5-7 and 11b). What is Micah's remedy?



CHAPTER VIII.  
THE LATER PROPHETS.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*First Day.*—Joel ii. 28-iii. 21.

*Second Day.*—Read Obadiah and get his message.

*Third Day.*—Daniel i. Note the firmness, yet gentleness, of Daniel.

*Fourth Day.*—Habakkuk i. and ii.

*Fifth Day.*—Jeremiah i. Jeremiah's call. Compare the calls of Moses, Samuel, and Isaiah.

*Sixth Day.*—Jeremiah xxxi. 23-40.

*Seventh Day.*—Ezekiel xxxiii.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE LATER PROPHETS.

THE dates of Joel and Obadiah are problems that must be solved from internal evidence. Discussion of these prophets has been delayed until now, not for the purpose of claiming the later dates, but for two reasons: First, we are better able to treat problems of authorship at this stage; and, secondly, whatever be the dates of these books, they are not in the direct line of prophetic development sketched in the preceding chapter. They are either early and preliminary or else late and specialized in theme.

The prophecy of Obadiah is directed wholly against Edom, whose rejoicing at Judah's disaster is to be avenged by complete destruction in the day of Jehovah's judgment. The book is a single chapter of twenty-one verses; but the message, though short, is by no means unimportant. He who rejoices in another's fall is scarcely less guilty than the perpetrator of the crime.

Joel, like Obadiah, preaches a message of the day of the judgment of Jehovah; not, however, upon one, but upon all nations. The book opens with a picture of desolation, "That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten" (i. 4), and the prophet calls Zion to repentance. Jehovah then has pity on his people (Joel ii. 18) and promises not only that he will restore the years which the locust hath eaten, but that he will pour out his spirit upon all flesh, and in the day of Jehovah "Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom a wilderness," but Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people and a stronghold to the children of Israel. And "Judah shall abide forever." (Joel iii. 19, 20.)

Joel speaks repeatedly of Zion and Judah and Jerusalem and uses the name Israel as the covenant name of God's

chosen people, not as the distinctive name of the northern kingdom, to which he makes no allusion whatever. After making the above statement, Kirkpatrick, in his "Doctrine of the Prophets," asks: "Was he among the earliest of the prophets in the period before Assyria had ever begun to loom like a threatening storm cloud on the horizon? Or is he to be placed among the very latest of the prophets at a time when even the memory of Babylon's cruel tyranny had been blunted into vague generalities?" Kirkpatrick prefers the former view.

The question as to whether Isaiah xl.-lxvi. and Zechariah ix.-xiv. are the works of the prophets in whose books they are respectively included is one beyond our compass, as are also the problems of the dates of Jonah and of Daniel. Some regard these questions as vital to Christianity and think that much of our religion stands or falls with the traditional view of such problems. Others feel that they are minor matters to be determined by the evidence alone. Further reference to the latter part of Isaiah and treatment of the book of Jonah are postponed for discussion in the chapter on Messianic prophecy and the wider outlook, but the book of Daniel requires some notice here.

Daniel stands in our English Bible as one of the four major prophets. In the Hebrew Bible, however, it stands not among the prophets, but in the third of the three canons or collections of Old Testament books—the Hagiographa, or miscellaneous writings. It is not therefore counted as one of the prophetic books at all. Daniel consists of two parts. The former, chapters i.-vi., tells the story of Daniel and his friends at the courts of Babylon and Persia, and tells it in such a way that Daniel still stands out in the world's literature as the type of moral courage just as Iago is the type of villany and Alcestis of wifely devotion and sacrifice. The latter, chapters vii.-xii., is a series of mysterious symbolic visions or apocalypses embedded in historical accounts con-



cerning them. This latter section is the Old Testament representative of the apocalypse, a form of literature very common in post-biblical Jewish writings and represented in the New Testament by the book of Revelation. Tendencies toward this style of writing occur in the prophecies of Joel and Ezekiel and in the visions of Zechariah.

Around Daniel has raged one of the crucial battles of literary and historical criticism, the critical view maintaining that it is, like some of the apocryphal writings, "a prophecy after the event," written during the persecution of the Jews under Antiochus Euphron in the sixties of the second century before Christ, and not, as was formerly supposed, a prophecy by Daniel himself of the course of history for the centuries following his day. In any case it must have been a powerful agent both in its beautiful picture of Daniel and his companions and in the supreme hopefulness of the apocalyptic visions in instilling courage into the hearts of the Jewish people during the great conflict under Antiochus Euphron and his successors. It is a clarion call to courage and to faithfulness to Israel's God.

Entering now into the more undisputed field, we meet the prophecies of Nahum. If Obadiah could view with satisfaction the coming destruction of one who rejoiced in his brother's calamity, it was natural that Nahum should hail the approaching fall of the great despoiler Nineveh. This he does in a book of remarkable power. So vivid is his description of Nineveh that many think him to have been a resident of that city. His book, which bears his name, was written, it is generally agreed, sometime between the fall of Thebes (about 664 B.C.), to which it points as an example that the "Bloody City" might well heed, and the fall of Nineveh (about 607 B.C.). "Jehovah," he declares, "is slow to anger and great in power, and will by no means clear the guilty. . . . Who can stand before his indignation? . . . Jehovah is good; a stronghold in the day of trou-

ble, and he knoweth them that take refuge in him." (Nah. i. 3-7.) The destruction of Nineveh is for Nahum at once a mark of the surety of God's punishment of the oppressor and of his mercy toward the oppressed.

During this period (the age of Josiah) came, too, another prophet, Zephaniah. After the days of the ascendancy of Isaiah and Micah, during the closing years of Hezekiah's reign, came the reaction under Manasseh in opposition to the increasing tendencies toward the centralization of the worship and the destruction of the local sanctuaries. Foreign worship and rites beyond what Judah had ever known were introduced, and persecution of the prophetic party was the order of the day. Naturally, then, Zephaniah saw the day of Jehovah, a day of wrath, overhanging not only Nineveh but Judah as well. The book consists of three chapters, divided by Sanders and Kent as follows: Verse 1 giving the caption, and i. 2-ii. 3, the day of Jehovah, a peculiarly distressful day for Judah; second, ii. 4-15, the day of Jehovah, a day of judgment for the nations; third, iii. 1-13, the day of Jehovah, a means or redemption for Jerusalem, upon which follows; fourth, iii. 14-20, the song of the redeemed. Another authority (Driver) divides somewhat more tersely: Chapter i., the menace; chapters ii. 1-iii. 7, the admonition; chapter iii. 8-20, the promise. It may be, however, that the prophet's thought in the second division was rather of the comfort to be taken in the destruction of the oppressors than of the admonition to be gotten from the fate of the wicked.

The earlier prophetic books (as the opening chapter of Amos and chapters xv.-xxiii. of Isaiah will indicate) were not without their message of judgment upon the nations, but the day of the judgment of Jehovah takes a peculiar turn and plays a larger part in the preaching of the prophets just mentioned.

The significance of our next prophet, of whom little is

known except that he was contemporary with Jeremiah, is perhaps better stated by George Adam Smith than by any one else: "He is called a prophet, but at first he does not adopt an attitude which is characteristic of the prophets. His face is set in an opposite direction to theirs. They address the nation Israel on behalf of God; he rather speaks to God on behalf of Israel. Their task was Israel's sin, the proclamation of God's doom, and the offer of his grace to their penitence; Habakkuk's task is God himself, the effort to find out what he means by permitting tyranny and wrong. They attack the sins; he is the first to state the problems of life." The details of the prophetic struggle with the problem of evil we shall meet in the following chapter. Here is to be noted the prophetic change of viewpoint—the "gospel for an age of doubt"—for even Jeremiah betrays the same impulse to question the ways of God. Can we not see the same change of front in the attitude of the American pulpit of our own age compared with that of fifty years ago reflected in the contrast between the preaching of Amos and Isaiah and of this new age of prophecy? Habakkuk's questioning soon passes over into his sure ground. Retribution will come, though long delayed. The stone shall cry out of the wall against "him that getteth an evil gain to his house," and let him that establisheth a city by iniquity know that "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea," and the maker of idols shall learn that "Jehovah is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silent before him." The book closes with a poem entitled "A Prayer of Habakkuk."

In some respects the greatest of all the prophets, and certainly the most pathetic of all, is Jeremiah. In him we take up again the thread of the larger development which was dropped with Isaiah's doctrine of the holiness of God; for while Habakkuk's question is new, his solution is but

an echo and an adaptation to newer times of an age-long message. Jeremiah sees Jehovah as a God of the individual and becomes the prophet of personal religion. He stands alone as perhaps no other since Elijah had done, and in his utter loneliness Hosea's message of God's love brings to Jeremiah's heart a sense of comfort and of fellowship with him. Elijah was a dutiful servant of Jehovah, hurling his fulminations; Jeremiah was a suffering child of God, pleading with his wayward brothers. His message of personal religion comes by the usual path of God's revelation—personal experience. The nation had hitherto been conceived collectively as a child of Jehovah. Jeremiah experiences a personal relationship when the remainder of the nation is against him. "In those days shall ye say no more, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. . . . This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith Jehovah, I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah." (Jer. xxxi. 29ff.)

Jeremiah began his prophetic career just before the great reformation under Josiah. Though feeling that before his birth God had destined him for a definite task, when impelled to begin work as a boy preacher he hesitates and answers the voice of his call: "I cannot speak, for I am a child." Nevertheless, he does speak as never man had spoken before. Like Hosea, religious apostasy is the thing

which fills his soul with horror. The throes of the economic revolution are long since passed. They who have sown the wind are reaping the whirlwind. The sad fact now is not that the rich oppress the poor but that rich and poor alike have forgotten God. God says: "And I brought you into a plentiful land, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made my heritage an abomination. . . . For pass over to the isles of Kittim; . . . and see if there hath been such a thing. Hath a nation changed its gods, which yet are no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. . . . For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." (Jer. ii. 7-13.) There is only one result possible. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backsliding shall reprove thee," declares the prophet. Jeremiah sees no hope save in submission to the foreigner, and he makes bold to say so. The result is persecution and the dungeon. Though treated as a traitor and a renegade, he grieves as did no other for the afflictions of his countrymen. He is dubbed the "Weeping Prophet;" but he weeps because his heart breaks at the sight of Judah's real sorrow and deeper calamity—not her captivity, but her irreligion. Through it all he sees a ray of hope and offers his comfort to those who will accept the situation and seek God instead of rebelling vainly against Babylon. "Fear not thou, O Jacob my servant, saith Jehovah; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee, but I will correct thee in measure and will in no wise leave thee unpunished." (Jer. xli. 28.) "And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return." (Jer. xxxiii. 7.)

Following the example of earlier prophets, Jeremiah felt that God would have him put his prophecies in more per-

manent form. Consequently he dictates to Baruch, who writes them in "a roll of a book." "And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, I am shut up; I cannot go into the house of Jehovah; therefore go thou, and read in the roll which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of Jehovah in the ears of the people in Jehovah's house upon the fast day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities." (Jer. xxxvi. 5, 6.) This procedure produces consternation, resulting in the burning of the roll by the king. But, undaunted, "Jeremiah took another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim the king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words." (Jer. xxxvi. 32.)<sup>1</sup>

A younger contemporary of Jeremiah, but living his life in the land of the exiles instead of in the devastated homeland, was the prophet Ezekiel. The literary arrangement of the book which bears his name is more systematic, and his style is more studied. He revels in allegories and symbols. He cuts off his hair and beard and divides it into three equal parts; one part is burned, another smitten with the sword, and the third scattered to the winds. This represents the fate of Jerusalem. "And I looked," he says in his opening chapter, "and, behold, a stormy wind came out of the north, . . . and out of the midst thereof, . . . the likeness of four living creatures. . . . And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings." (Ezek. i. 4-6.) Such is his style, tending toward the apocalypse seen in Daniel and the post-biblical Jewish literature.

He was a kind of pastor to the Exile people, and at his

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<sup>1</sup>Any helpful division of Jeremiah would be too detailed to be given here. The reader is referred to the works of Driver and McFadyen and the commentaries.

house the elders would gather for instruction. His conception of the duty of a pastor or prophet is given in the thirty-third chapter of his book. "Thou son of man," he hears Jehovah say to him (Ezek. xxxiii. 7), "I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore, hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me." He is a chief factor in keeping alive the love for the homeland and the hope for the future. Ezekiel represents also more than any other man the two leading phases of Israelitish religious life. He is both prophet and priest and, unlike Jeremiah, he lets neither office swallow up the other. Away from the temple and its worship, he loves its ceremonies back into life, enlarges them, and becomes the founder of the later priestly life of the nation and the architect for an ideal temple.

In many things, being a disciple of Jeremiah, he emphasizes his master's doctrine of individual responsibility and individual religion, and, building on Isaiah, he sets forth with still greater emphasis the glory, majesty, and holiness of God. The systematizing of the doctrine of Divine Providence is perhaps his most original prophetic work. Thus by summing up the past and adding his own contribution and doing this not in scattered prophetic discourses collected later into a book but in an orderly treatise, he becomes the father of Israelitish systematic theology. Chapters i.-xxiv. are early prophecies, chapters xxv.-xxxii. prophecies concerning the nations, and chapters xxxiii.-xlvi. the larger future of restored Israel.

Now the exile is over and the first blush of enthusiastic return is past. The temple, however, is still in ruins, and "the people are fast reconciling themselves to an existence without a temple." At such a crisis the prophets Haggai and Zechariah came forward. Many have considered temple-building a minor theme for a prophet, but without it the work of Ezekiel must have come to naught and the general

apathy might have brought disaster upon Israel's religious life. "It is not right for you to live in sealed houses while the temple of your God lies in ruins," declared Haggai, in effect. And later, when the old men who had known the glory of Solomon's temple wept at the littleness of the attempt of the poverty-stricken people, Haggai comes forward again with a larger spiritual view: "The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace."

Zechariah strikes hands with Haggai and comes forward with his series of visions. He saw a man measuring Jerusalem. "And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him, and said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls, by reason of the multitude of men and cattle therein. For I, saith Jehovah, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and I will be the glory in the midst of her." (Zech. ii. 3-5.)

Not far from the same time the last book of Old Testament prophecy speaks through the mouth of one who goes by the name of Malachi, though Malachi is likely not a proper name, but a Hebrew word meaning "my messenger." The temple has been built, but the people are negligent and fail to bring tithes. "Will a man rob God?" the prophet says. "Yet ye rob me," he declares as the mouthpiece of Jehovah. Then, with the prophetic doctrine of the day of the judgment of Jehovah and the hope of the rising of the "Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings" unto them that fear Jehovah's name and of a coming Elijah for the restoration of all things, Malachi closes his message.

#### QUESTIONS ON THE PROBLEMS OF CHAPTER VIII.

1. What are the divisions and the turns of the thought in the book of Obadiah from your reading of it? What is its message, stated more fully than the text gives it?
2. Name in chronological order as far as you can all of the great



prophets of Israel and Judah. From which of the two kingdoms did each come? Read the opening verses of the various books, considering that after the earliest prophets the northern kingdom has passed off the stage forever. Amos was from Tekoa of Judah, but prophesied in Israel. Does this fact give especial meaning to Amos vii. 10f?

3. What are the differences between the messages of Obadiah, Nahum, and Zephaniah?

4. What is the significance of Habakkuk in the history of prophetic development? Write a two-page summary of his message. What is the significance of Jeremiah?

5. Where did Jeremiah spend his life? Where Ezekiel? Consider how much of the Bible has a background outside of Palestine. Name the books which have.

6. How would you contrast and compare Ezekiel and Jeremiah?

7. Read Joel ii. and Habakkuk i. in the light of this chapter's study.

8. Do you think the questions of authorship, etc., vital to Christianity, or are they questions to be decided on the evidence alone?

9. What is your estimate of the character and career of Daniel as drawn in the first six chapters of the book which bears his name?



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY.

## CHAPTER IX.

*First Day.*—Genesis i.-ii. 4.

*Second Day.*—Isaiah. x. 1-15.

*Third Day.*—Job iv. 7, 8; v. 17-27; xxxiv. 7-12. Consider that these are the words of Job's friends and hence are no more put forward as the opinions of the author than the words and actions of Caliban and Iago are those of Shakespeare. Yet ask yourself how much is truth and how much is mistaken viewpoint in the passages.

*Fourth Day.*—Isaiah liii.

*Fifth Day.*—Job xi. 7-10. Who is speaking? Job xii. 9-10. Who speaks here? Job xl. 6-19. Who speaks here?

*Sixth Day.*—Esther iv. "God's own hand hath need of thine."

*Seventh Day.*—Psalms xlii.; lxviii. 5; cvi. 1-5. The problem and the eye of faith. Cf. Father Faber's beautiful hymn, "O It Is Hard to Work for God."

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY.

THE existence of God is, as is generally recognized, an underlying assumption of the Old Testament. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Ps. xiv. 1; liii. 1) is its only word against atheism, and this is directed against the practical rather than the theoretical atheist. The latter was not, in fact, one of the enemies with which the Israelitish religion had to contend. The Bible, therefore, has no systematic philosophy. It does not attempt to win currency for its philosophic ideas by syllogistic reasoning, but rather by the supreme attractiveness of its solution of the problems of universal life—by its answer to the heart-needs of men. "Make the truth lovely," said Joubert, "and do not try to arm her: mankind will be less inclined to contend with her." "Religion is not a syllogism, but a standpoint," and the deep things thereof are colored but never destroyed by changes in a metaphysical basis.

Few men formulate systematic philosophies for themselves, but every man has his philosophy. Even those who claim to despise all philosophy are simply stating in a crude way the basic principle of their own. To observe that a table makes a different impression on the mind from a tree, that they may manifest different phenomena, is science; to believe that this difference is real and fundamental, or unreal and superficial, or to claim not to know which, is to have a philosophy.

The Bible philosophy is, therefore, to be found in the groundwork of the entire thinking of its writers. The foundation of all is "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This is not a world wrung from the grasp of primitive evil or chaos, as the Babylonians

thought; nor does its divine Ruler come to power by being a child of fortune saved from the all-devouring Kronos, as in Greek myth; nor is it the resultant of a series of Gnostic emanations lest a holy God should touch vile matter; nor yet an agnostic, "somewhat" leaving man in the dark abyss of uncertainty. God created the heavens and the earth. With simple, sublime majesty he said, "Let there be light, and light was." "He commanded, and it stood fast," and "God saw that it was good" (Ps. xxxiii. 9), and to this day

"The heavens declare the glory of God,  
And the firmament showeth his handiwork."

God does not speak merely in the works of nature and show himself through nature's power. On the contrary, he is above it, and nature is small. At the presence of the Lord

"The mountains skipped like rams,  
The little hills like lambs." (Ps. cxiv. 4.)

His supreme greatness is not that the mighty waves manifest his power, but that they see his presence and flee, or that, as the New Testament expresses this Old Testament conception, he can say to their fury, "Peace, be still," and there is a great calm.

The Old Testament conception of the dignity of man follows. Conscious of his own weakness and insignificance, the Psalmist exclaims:

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,  
The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;  
What<sup>1</sup> is man, that thou art mindful of him?  
And the son of man that thou visitest him?" (Ps. viii.)

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<sup>1</sup>"What" means either "how great" or "how little." There is some discussion as to which is the real idea. In any case the thought is man's dignity in spite of the superior size and power of nature, and the words are spoken in adoring wonder.

In fitting protest against materialism, ancient or modern, comes the answer :

"Thou hast made him a little lower than thyself,<sup>1</sup>  
And hast crowned him with glory and honor."

The unthinking clod, be it large as a star, is not so great as that which sees and thinks and loves. Having made sun and moon and starry heavens, the sea and the denizens of the deep, the earth with its carpet of green, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, "God saw that it was good." But there was something higher with which he would crown all. "Let us make man," he said, "in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion. . . . And God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

The relation of God to the creature thus made is eternal love and care and friendship. The free and easy companionship of Abraham with his God is one of the beautiful pictures of all times. Fleeing the wrath of the brother whom he had wronged, Jacob lies down at night with a stone for his pillow, dreams a dream of God's presence, and feels a sense of his great care. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." (Ps. ciii. 13.) The Psalmist cries again

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit?  
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?  
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:  
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there.  
If I take the wings of the morning,  
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;  
Even there shall thy hand lead me,  
And thy right hand shall hold me.  
If I say, Surely the darkness shall overwhelm me,  
And the light about me shall be night,

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<sup>1</sup>Hebrew "Elohim." See Revised Version and margin.

Even the darkness hideth not from thee,  
 But the night shineth as the day:  
 The darkness and the light are both alike to thee."  
 (Ps. cxxxix. 7-12.)

Why in the creation of such a God should there be pain or woe? This, the origin of evil, is the deepest question of human thought. The Old Testament doctrine is that the first secret of it all is sin. Primeval man was given the test of obedience for the enhancement of divine glory, for the development of human character. The glory of man's first home has made Eden the synonym of loveliness and has usurped and almost monopolized the Greek word for a garden of beauty—Paradise. But sin enters with man's disobedience, and in the trail of sin come death and woe.

This story of Eden, however, by no means solves the problem of evil; and it is not used as the basis of a philosophy until the days of Paul—or at least is not so used in the Old Testament. Its application to practical life is simply that "the way of transgressors is hard;" therefore

"Fret not thyself because of evil doers,  
 Neither be thou envious against them that work unrighteousness.  
 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass,  
 And wither as the green herb."  
 (Ps. xxxvii. 1, 2.)

This is true, but on the other hand, though "Jehovah delivereth them out of them all," still "many are the afflictions of the righteous." (Ps. xxxiv. 19.) The blessedness, furthermore, of him "that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers—the blessedness, in other words, of the righteous life, seems far above the attainment of the average man. On the basis, therefore, of the love of God, there comes a message of a more universal cast, the crowning glory of the Old Testament philosophy concerning God's relation to man. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." (Ps. xxxii. 1.)



But, granted that the Lord delivereth him, why should the righteous suffer? Or, if the only righteousness be that of forgiven sin, why is suffering without evident relation to that righteousness? For, as the Hebrew singers testify, it often seems as if their sorrows are greater than those of the wicked. The ever elusive problem leads us on like a desert mirage.

Israel has sinned. How shall she be punished? "Ho Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation!" (Isa. x. 5f.) But is the Assyrian better than the Hebrew that he should be God's instrument of punishment? No: "howbeit, he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so, but it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few." "Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria and the glory of his high looks." Let not the judge who issues sentence forget that he must himself stand before a greater and juster Judge.

But after all is said, in comparison with other nations, Israel has suffered "double for all her sins." (Isa. xl. 2.) And the prophet catches a vision of the why. The nightingale sings most sweetly at the midnight hour, and only to the sufferer are life's deepest messages revealed. Israel has suffered in order that she might bless the world. It is mother-suffering that begets mother-love. He liveth best and teacheth best who loveth best; and suffering is at once the test and the parent of love.

Why, still further, however, should God create a world in which the suffering of the righteous is the necessary road to truth and the redemption of mankind? Many helpful suggestions have been made, but only one answer. Job finds that answer when out of the whirlwind God speaks to him: "There are things beyond my ken." And this must be the

final answer of every human attempt at solving the deepest problems of life.<sup>1</sup>

The Old Testament ultimate ground of obligation—gratitude to God—forcibly appears in the prelude to the Ten Commandments, “I am Jehovah thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage;” therefore, shalt thou obey these “Ten Commandments.” “Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them,” we read in Amos ii. 9, “whose height was like the height of the cedars.” *Nevertheless*, they have become oppressors of the poor and have given the “Nazarites wine to drink; and commanded the prophets, saying, Prophecy not.” And again, in Hosea xi. 1, 2: “When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.” But “they have sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense unto graven images.” God has led Israel throughout her history, and Israel owes it to him to worship him and not to follow other gods, and to live a righteous, religious life. This is the prophetic reason for doing right, and this is further enforced by the hope of reward and the fear of punishment—a punishment well deserved in view of what Jehovah has done for them.

There has been much dispute among scholars of different schools as to how far the Old Testament teaches a doctrine of immortality. The thought that Christianity brought life and immortality to light does not mean that the doctrine of a future life was not taught before the days of Jesus. Even savage peoples, with their ideas of ghosts and much more, of “happy hunting grounds,” and the like, believe in some sort of a vague, shadowy existence after death; and Socrates, though by no means certain, asserts a doctrine of individual immortality. On the other hand, the passages in the

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<sup>1</sup>The book of Job suggests several partial answers to the question of suffering, especially noting that it is disciplinary and, negatively, that individual suffering is not always the result of individual sin; but the limitation of man’s knowledge is the book’s ultimate answer.

Old Testament which openly express a belief in immortality are surprisingly few, except such as refer to the shadowy existence of the Place of the Dead. Perhaps one reason is that before the days of Jeremiah the nation as a whole rather than the individual was thought of as the child of Jehovah. It is significant that the Sadducees, who accepted only the Pentateuch as their Bible, refused to believe in a resurrection, and that Jesus in confuting their position did not refer to a single decisive passage or passages, not even to the case of Enoch, but to the implication of Moses at the burning bush. Sheol is constantly mentioned, but its exact significance is disputed; yet in such passages as Psalm xlix. 13-15 and Job xix. 25-27<sup>1</sup> there is surer ground. Nevertheless, the great advance of the New Testament over the Old on this point cannot be gainsaid and cannot be better illustrated than by contrasting Jehovah's promise to Abraham in Genesis xii. with Jesus's farewell to his disciples as recorded in John xiv.

The Bible philosophy of history is

"Righteousness exalteth a nation;

But sin is a reproach to any people." (Prov. xiv. 34.)

Its illustration is found in the entire history of Israel. "And Jehovah raised up judges," says the record, "who saved them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. And yet they hearkened not unto their judges, for they played the harlot after other gods, and bowed themselves down unto them: they turned aside quickly out of the way wherein their fathers walked, obeying the commandments of Jehovah; but they did not so. And when Jehovah raised them up judges, then Jehovah was with the judge, and saved them out of the hands of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented Jehovah because of their groaning by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them. But

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<sup>1</sup>Unless Job be considered as representative of the nation rather than as an individual.

it came to pass that when the judge was dead they turned back and dealt more corruptly than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their doings, nor from their stubborn way. And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel; and he said, Because this nation has transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice, "I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations that Joshua left when he died." (Judges ii. 16-21.) Not lack of armies, therefore, but sin was the cause of Israel's woe. Following out these principles, with marvelous insight the Psalmist sets forth the ultimate result of the forces of history, not the warlike and the proud, but

"The meek shall inherit the land;

And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

(Ps. xxxvii. 11.)

This last is the keynote of Bible ethics. The connection between the name of Athena, the goddess of wisdom, and Athens, the intellectual Queen City, is not altogether accidental. The Socratic exaltation of knowledge and the bent of the minds of the early Greek-Christian fathers are the natural consequences. The story of Romulus and Remus, as before hinted, where Romulus slays his brother almost as a joke, is typical of Rome, and the Roman ethic is an exaltation of valor. But in keeping with the fact that in Hebrew thought the murdered Abel and not the murderer Cain is the hero, and that the gentle, religious, giving-way-to-others spirit of Abraham stands in the center of Hebrew ideals, the Hebrew ethic is an exaltation of goodness. The Hebrew Psalmist, therefore, sings: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked." Her sages declare:

"A soft answer turneth away wrath:

But a grievous word stirreth up anger."

(Prov. xv. 1.)

The doctrine which rises majestically in the ethics of Jesus to the Golden Rule shows itself in the Old Testament in the condemnation of the "Heresy of Cain," who asks: "Am I my brother's keeper?" Under Jehovah's complete rule there is no necessity for strife. Brotherly love and fellowship shall reign "and peoples shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." The spirit of peace and gentleness shall permeate even the beasts of the field, "and the lion shall eat straw like the ox." (Isa. ii. 4; xi. 7, 9.)

The Old Testament doctrine of divine election is best illustrated in the story of Joseph. A very radical expository commentator heads the chapter on his life, "Joseph, the Favored of Yahweh."<sup>1</sup> This title, however, gives a very unfair idea of the divine "favoritism" as the story of Joseph sets it forth. Jacob was partial to Joseph for no other reason than that Joseph was the son of his old age and of his favorite wife, Rachel. But Yahweh's favoritism does not exclude Joseph's being sold into slavery and his being cast into prison by false accusation. It is a favoritism that leads through suffering with a view to the welfare of others, and in the carrying out of his purposes Yahweh makes the wrath of man to praise him. "As for you," Joseph says to his brethren, "you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." (Gen. i. 20.) This same idea of election to service and even to suffering runs through the entire Old Testament,

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<sup>1</sup>Yahweh is the original form, as best scholars can make it out, of Israel's name for God, Jehovah being the consonants for the divine name pronounced with the vowels of Adonai, the Hebrew word for Lord, because the later Jews regarded the name as too sacred to be pronounced in its proper form. Y or J, H, W with ā, o, and ä thus gives Yahowa or Jehova[h].

whether applied to individuals or to the nation. It will be developed more fully in a later chapter.

#### QUESTIONS ON THE PROBLEMS OF CHAPTER IX.

1. Where are the Bible philosophy and theology found?
2. What is the Old Testament doctrine of the origin of things? Think out and contrast it with the other theories mentioned in the text.
3. What is the doctrine of God involved in each of your favorite Psalms—that is, what idea would you have of God if all you knew about him were contained in the one under consideration? What is the doctrine of God in Psalm ii.? in Psalm xi.? in Psalm xlii.? in Exodus xv.?
4. What is the Old Testament doctrine of man? What is the view of man in Psalm viii.? in Psalm cxxvii.?
5. What are the stages of the Old Testament discussion of the doctrine of evil as discussed in the text?
6. Read the first few verses of Genesis xii. and the opening verses of John xiv., and compare the outlook and promise of each with the other. Yet the kingdom of God, as Jesus taught it, is likewise a social immortality, but based on individual immortality.
7. Read the story of Samson, and compare God's "favoritism" in his case with that in the case of Joseph.
8. Compare Joseph's case with what you know of Abraham's. Of David's.

CHAPTER X.  
THE WISDOM ELEMENT.

## CHAPTER X.

*First Day.*—Judges xiv.

*Second Day.*—Proverbs i. 7-19; vii. 1-27; and xxx. 18-20.

*Third Day.*—Proverbs vi. 6-11 and xxx. 24-28.

*Fourth Day.*—Proverbs i. 20-22; iii. 13-20; and viii. 1-11.

*Fifth Day.*—Ecclesiastes xii.

*Sixth Day.*—Psalms i. and xxxvii.

*Seventh Day.*—Job xxviii. 12-28.



## CHAPTER X.

### THE WISDOM ELEMENT.

THOUGH the Israelites were not systematizers of thought, there is one element of the Old Testament which is primarily philosophy and one class of men who were preëminently philosophers. This, however, is not to be taken in the Greek sense, for the Hebrew philosopher does not speculate concerning the nature of things or the ultimate laws of ethics and metaphysics.

Of the three great educational forces of the old country life in America, the pulpit, the stump, and the cross-roads store, the last has been all but ignored. Here, nevertheless, gathered from day to day the farmers of the neighborhood, and it became a clearing house for the ideas of the community. If the preacher preached from the pulpit on Sunday, the farmer had his say through the week from the cracker box on the porch of the cross-roads store, where he gave his views on theology and ethics. If a candidate for Congress spoke in the county seat one day, for the next six months the cracker box philosopher discussed his speech and the political questions of the hour. Here, too, the successful man of the world told how he planted and harvested or of how he doctored his horse or cow; and if there was some wise man who, like Robert Louis Stevenson's "Will o' the Mill," had lived long and thoughtfully, the cross-roads store was the pulpit whence spread his epigrams.

Now, there arose in Israel just such a quaint group of conversation-philosophers or "wise men," who delighted in epigram and who, with their pungent maxims of everyday life, began to rival the prophet and the priest. These proverbs got themselves repeated on all sides. The glory of wisdom and of knowledge—of more value than gold or

rubies—the foolishness of a haughty spirit, the dangers of strong drink and impurity, and the virtue of prudence became common tenets everywhere. The general character of these philosophers can perhaps be best illustrated by calling Benjamin Franklin the “wise man” of American literature, and by pointing to Solomon as the archetype of the wise men of Israel. So true is the latter that the book of their short sayings is headed “The Solomonic Proverbs,” just as the Psalms are called the Davidic Psalms, though many of them are not attributed to David by the Psalter itself. There are several distinct groups of these Solomonic proverbs, as the first verses of the first, tenth, twenty-fifth, thirtieth, and thirty-first chapters of the book of Proverbs will indicate. The book of Ecclesiastes, “the words of the Preacher” (i. 1) declares: “And further because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, *he pondered,<sup>1</sup> sought out, and set in order many proverbs.*” To understand “the words of the wise and their dark sayings” is one of the rewards of Bible study.

Perhaps the earliest examples of the wisdom type are such folk poems as the riddle couplets of Samson (Judges xiv.). Here, too, we find what seems to be genuinely premeditated rhyme. Samson puts forth his riddle which as it stands in the Hebrew Bible cannot be rhyme.

Out of the eater came forth meat;  
Out of the strong came forth sweetness.

But after the Philistines guess his riddle, suspecting that his bride had betrayed his secrets, he answers:

“If with my heifer you did not plow,  
You should not guess my riddle now.”

Kautzsch notes rhyme in other places also, as in the songs of Lamech, and in Judges xvi. 24, where the Philistines turned the folk rhyme of Samson:

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<sup>1</sup>Margin, “gave ear.”

"Our God has delivered into our hand  
Him who spreads murder and havoc thro' our land."<sup>1</sup>

This, however, is only a very subordinate type of the wisdom literature, just as it is by no means representative of Old Testament poetry. In later times, the wise man or sage comes to be an important factor in the life of the nation. And when, after Malachi, the voice of prophecy is hushed or merged into the purely apocalyptic, the wise man and the wisdom literature hold a prominent place in Jewish life. Jesus himself adopts this method of teaching. Not only like the prophet does he preach, or like the rabbi teach in the synagogues, but also, like the wise man, he grips men by the way, uttering epigrams which circulate throughout the country. "Physician, heal thyself," "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country," and the Beatitudes are examples of this method in the teaching of Jesus.

But here we are concerned with the Old Testament alone. Already in Jeremiah (xviii. 18) the wise man is mentioned as coördinate with the prophet and the priest. "Come," say the people, "let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet."

The wisdom element consists of Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs, with certain of the Psalms, a few scattered passages elsewhere, and possibly Lamentations. It is interesting to note the frequent occurrence of the word "wisdom" in these books. In the books of our English Bible preceding Job, Cruden's "Concordance" gives but twenty-two references to the word, thirteen of which are historical references concerning Solomon. There are only twelve references in books which follow Ecclesiastes, several of which are prophetic observations concerning the wise man; and seven are in the book of Daniel, Daniel him-

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<sup>1</sup>See Kent's *Historical Bible* and Kautzsch's *Die Poesie und die Poetischen Bucher des Alten Testaments*.

self being in many ways a type of the Hebrew wise man. In the books from Job to Ecclesiastes, Cruden gives about seventy-five references to the word. A similar proportion holds for "wisdom" joined with "is," "thy wisdom," "of wisdom," and "wise."

All of these wisdom books except Ecclesiastes are written in true parallelism and hence are Hebrew poetry, and therefore final treatment of some of the poetic books and of Old Testament poetry has been delayed until this chapter. A reference to the Revised Version will show that the Psalter is divided into five books, beginning with the first, forty-second, seventy-third, ninetyeth, and one hundred and seventh Psalms, respectively. A glance at the caption of different Psalms will indicate that some are attributed to David, some to Asaph, some to the sons of Korah, two (the seventy-second and the one hundred and twenty-seventh) to Solomon, the ninetyeth to Moses, and that many have no author's name at all. David has been so thoroughly regarded, however, as the father of Israelitish song that the entire collection is frequently called the "psalms of David."

Comparatively few of the Psalms belong to the wisdom literature. The most conspicuous example is the opening song of the Psalter. It is not attributed (as reference to the caption or absence of caption will show) to David or to any other. "This Psalm," says Kirkpatrick, "is the development in poetic language of the thought repeated in so many forms in the book of Proverbs, that it is well with the righteous and ill with the wicked." The scorner, as in Proverbs, comes in for especial notice, and the simple didactic beauty is typical of the sage bathed in the spirit of purer poetry. The thirty-seventh may be mentioned as another conspicuous and noble wisdom Psalm.

Besides the Wisdom Psalms, of especial interest are the Penitential Psalms, in which the human soul pours forth its sorrow for individual sin; the Hallelujah Psalms, named for

the first two words, "hallelu" and "jah," the Hebrew for "praise ye Jehovah" ("jah" being a shorter form of Jehovah); and the Songs of Ascents. The meaning of this last term is much disputed. Many suppose it to refer to the use of these Psalms by pilgrims journeying "up" to Jerusalem to the feasts.

Following the Psalter is the book of Proverbs, the typical book of the short sayings of the sage. As the musician hero of Saul's court came to be revered as the father of Hebrew psalmody, so the boy king who desired above everything else "wisdom to govern the people" became the father of Hebrew wisdom. The problem of the book is stated in the opening verses (i. 2-6):

"To know wisdom and instruction;

• • • • •  
That the wise man may hear and increase in learning

• • • • •  
To understand a proverb and a figure;

The words of the wise and their dark sayings."

"The Proverbs of Solomon, the Son of David, King of Israel," is the heading of chapter i.; but chapter ix. seems to bring the first section to a close, for the tenth chapter opens with almost the same title, "The Proverbs of Solomon." It may, therefore, be a question whether the first title refers to the whole book, to the first section, or to a part of the first section. Again, at the opening of the twenty-fifth chapter we read: "These are the proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out." Chapter xxx. professes to be the words of Agur, the son of Jakeh; and chapter xxxi., "the words of King Lemuel, the oracle which his mother taught him." Some think they find another distinct section in the second division mentioned above, beginning with the seventeenth verse of the twenty-second chapter:

"Incline thy ear, and hear the words of the wise  
And apply thy heart unto my knowledge."

There is, therefore, every reason for believing that we have here several distinct collections of Solomonic proverbs, and especially so if the first title refers to the whole book, including the words of Agur and King Lemuel.

The subjects of the proverbs are the affairs of the common life of men. The sage finds his Greek parallel in Socrates as he preaches practical ethics on the streets of Athens rather than in Plato or Aristotle thinking out their worlds of ideas and actualities. Sometimes the chapters are a series of couplets in which there seems to be no connection. For example, in chapter xxv., verses 14-16:

- "14 As clouds and wind without rain,  
 So is he that boasts himself of his gifts falsely.  
 15 By long forbearing is a ruler persuaded,  
 And a soft tongue breaketh the bone.  
 16 Hast thou found honey? Eat so much as is sufficient for thee,  
 Lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it."

Again, as in chapter xxvi., there is a series quite as disconnected, but on a single theme:

- "1 As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest,  
 So honor is not seemly for a fool.  
 2 As a sparrow in her wandering, as the swallow in her flying,  
 So the curse that is causeless alighteth not.  
 3 A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass,  
 And a rod for the back of fools.  
 4 Answer not a fool according to his folly,  
 Lest thou also be like unto him."

Here the common theme is "the fool" (the "causeless curse" being evidently one of his products), though each separate couplet is a unity in itself.

Sometimes again, as in chapter i. 10-19, we have a number of verses fitting into one another and forming a complete whole, the general theme being (v. 10):

- "My son, if sinners entice thee,  
 Consent thou not."

The passage proceeds, detailing their invitation, while verses 15 and following enforce the reason for not consenting,

“For their feet run to evil.”

In like manner verses 20 and following discuss “the appeal of wisdom.”

The excellency of wisdom is the favorite theme and runs through the book. Prudence is exalted, warnings against wine and unchastity are urged, honesty and truthfulness and the various virtues of life are inculcated in sayings or groups of sayings or short connected poem-discourses.

As in Proverbs we have the short sayings of the sage, so in Job, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes we have the sage as he attacks in a more connected way and on a larger scale some of the deeper problems of life. The Song of Songs sets forth, as we have seen, with remarkable beauty “the problem of love.” The interpretation of this book as referring to the Church, the bride of Christ, has insuperable difficulties, and it is to be doubted if the average Bible student has ever gotten a very helpful grasp of it from this viewpoint, though in any case it is difficult to get the movement of the poem without a good commentary. Certainly its message, as we have seen, on the exaltation of “the love of man and woman when they love their best,” is sufficient to occupy the mind of as noble a sage as Israel under the guidance and inspiration of God could produce. Its general character we have already noted.

The question that the first Psalm answers so simply, that it is well with the good and ill with the wicked, is the problem that the book of Job tries to square with the facts of human experience. Job’s theme is therefore the problem of suffering. The book consists of three cycles of speeches between Job and his three friends, in the last of which Elihu the Buzite joins. The drama concludes with the voice of God, who brushes aside the cavilings of men and announces

the inscrutableness of the deeper problems of life. The prose prologue and epilogue and historical interlude of chapter xxxii. 1-5 rounds out the structure of the book.

Lamentations is a book of five chapters, each a complete poem, but upon the common theme of lament over the ruin of Judah and Zion. In the Hebrew the first four are acrostic poems, the first word of each verse in chapters i., ii., and iv. beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet, while in chapter iii. three verses begin with each letter in order. The relation of the book to the wisdom, poetic, and prophetic elements of the Old Testament is best brought together in the title of an article by Prof. Carle Budde referred to in Hasting's Bible Dictionary, "The Folk Song of Israel in the Mouth of the Prophets." "The Lamentations," McCurdy justly remarks, "reveal more conscious structural elaboration than any other book of the Bible."

There yet remains the book of Ecclesiastes on "the problem of life itself," the prose representative of the wisdom literature of the Old Testament. Moulton calls it the "most fascinating of all wisdom literature to those who desire to read, while it is the stumblingblock of all who have the responsibility of interpreting." The book opens with a statement of the dull monotony of existence—"that which hath been is that which shall be" (i. 9); "All is vanity." Pleasure fails to satisfy, then the author turns to wisdom only to see "how doth the wise man die even as the fool!" The theory of a season for everything, and everything in its season, is equally unsatisfying as are the other things to which he turns. Riches are unavailing; a good name brings little comfort; and "there is a righteous man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that longeth his life in his evil doing." Charity is urged. "Cast thy bread upon the waters;" "Sow in the morn thy seed," he says; and yet the passage closes "all that cometh is vanity." "Rejoice in thy youth" is suggested; but "youth and



the prime of life," comes the refrain, "are vanity." The search for happiness for its own sake is vain. The weary, forlorn soul can only turn to another side of life, and the last word of the book as we have it is "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." It is well that the satisfaction which the preacher sought so unavailingly because he sought it for its own sake the heroine of the Song of Songs found in a deep, faithful, human love, and the suffering Job found in a vision of God.

#### QUESTIONS ON THE PROBLEMS OF CHAPTER X.

1. What was the character of the Hebrew wise man and of the wisdom literature? What books are included in the wisdom element?
2. What is the theme of Psalm xxxvii., and what is the problem it tries to solve? Compare its solution with that of Job. Compare its spirit with that of the first Psalm.
3. Are the following references disconnected epigrams, or epigrams each complete in itself but upon a common theme, or connected poems? Proverbs ii. 1-10; vi. 6-11; viii. 1-7; x. 1-6; xi. 1-5; xix. 1-4; xxiii. 29-35; xxv. 17. Where the theme is common to several verses, what is the theme?
4. What is the character of the books of Lamentations and Ecclesiastes? What is the difference in the situations which form the backgrounds of each? Lamentations i. 1-3 and *passim*; Ecclesiastes i. 3; ii. 1, 2, 13-15; vii. 15; xi. 10. What is the experience which forms the background of Job? What is the prevailing and what the final tone of each of these three books? In one personal sorrow and affliction find an answer to the problem raised; in one a surfeited soul submits with hardly one really comforting thought; the other is a picture of despair with a prayer. To which book is each remark severally applicable?
5. Compare Nathan's parable with Jotham's fable (Judges ix. 7f; 2 Sam. xii. 1f. Does the one seem to you to reflect the earnest moral temper of the prophet and the other the spicy, folklore style of the wise man?



## CHAPTER XI.

### THE STORY OF SIN AND REDEMPTION.

## CHAPTER XI.

*First Day.*—Genesis iii.

*Second Day.*—Genesis iv.

*Third Day.*—Judges ii.

*Fourth Day.*—Isaiah i.

*Fifth Day.*—Ezekiel xx. 1-30.

*Sixth Day.*—Psalm cvi. 6-36; Matthew xxiii. 29-39; Acts vii.

51-53.

*Seventh Day.*—Isaiah lx. and lv.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE STORY OF SIN AND REDEMPTION.

To obtain a knowledge of the different books and classes of Old Testament literature is by no means to understand the Old Testament itself. One must view it in relation to its central theme, must understand why it is a genuine unity and what binds its various parts together. This central theme of the Old Testament as a whole, and really the chief reason for its having been gathered together into a single canon at all, is the story of sin and the process of redemption.

The opening picture of the Bible history presents God's ideal world, fresh from the making of his own hand. Man is the center of creation, and everything conceivable is done for his comfort and welfare. In the garden in which he is placed there grows not only every tree that is good for food, but every tree that is pleasant to the sight (Gen. ii. 9); and in the midst of all the Tree of Life, hard by which flows the River of Eden. For his companionship woman is made, and God himself deigns to walk in the cool of the eventide and to commune with the creature of his hand. And it is not a thoughtless, idle heaven in which man is placed. The nobler responsibilities without the vexing worries are his, for God placed him in the garden "to dress it and keep it;" and, best of all, no sin is there.

But from this state of primeval innocence and joy man falls through sin. It is only an act of disobedience, not done through willful rebellion, but through yielding to present temptation; yet man experiences his first consciousness of sin, realizes his own nakedness, and attempts to hide himself from God. Nor is this tragedy of Eden hard for us to understand, for it is reenacted in every life. Alas! too, it is not the whole story either with us or in Eden. The next

appearance of sin is with usury. Cain, the firstborn of the disobedient, erstwhile innocent pair, in a fit of anger kills his brother; and it is not many generations before the savage boast falls from the lips of Lamech that he will be many times more savage than Cain. A little later the ultimate trend of the first act of disobedience appears (Gen. vi. 5-7a): "And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented Jehovah that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him in his heart. And Jehovah said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground." Then follows the disastrous flood over all the earth, wherefrom only righteous Noah and his family escape. Almost the first event after the receding of the waters was the drunkenness of Noah and the unfilial conduct of Ham, followed by a father's curse. The next step is the presumption of man and the resulting confusion of tongues. (Gen. xi. iff.)

The history even of Abraham and the other patriarchs shows the weakness of the best men of their day, as in Abraham's cowardly lie which exposed his wife to insult, and as in Jacob's swindling schemes. Ten of Jacob's sons do not hesitate to sell their brother Joseph into slavery, and on the eve of the greatest crisis in Hebrew history comes the incident of the golden calf. (Ex. xxxii.). In fact, Moses, while dealing with the children of Israel, convinces himself that, though the chosen people of Jehovah, they are a stiff-necked people. They are continually longing for the fleshpots of Egypt and the dull drudgery of well-fed slavery. So constantly do they murmur and rebel that the thought of Jehovah is "get you [Moses] up from among this congregation that I may consume them in a moment." Moses himself is by no means perfect, and his fatal sin, according to Numbers xx. 8-13 and xxvii. 14, is the secret of his not crossing over into the land of promise. Under Joshua the

same trail of sin appears, though, as under Moses, the people are said to have been true to Jehovah: "And Israel served Jehovah all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua." (Josh. xxiv. 31.)

The constant recurrence of certain formulæ in the book of Judges gives an idea of the purpose of that book. They are simply a condensation of the introduction of the book (Judges ii. 11ff): "And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah. . . . And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that despoiled them." Some form of variation of this recurring formula forms the setting of the entire book, especially summarizing the history between the death of one judge and the rise of another to leadership.

Samuel looms up against the background of the sin and ruin of Eli's house, and Saul is but a type of the sin of the people. Even David, the best man of his day, is guilty of the double crime of murder and adultery; and the sin of his household, of Ammon and of Absalom and of Solomon, with his final ruin and oppressive tyranny, is at once the full heritage of a father's example and the carrying out of the thread of the Old Testament story.

The formulæ which are the setting of the books of Kings are chiefly statements of the synchronism of each king with the king of the sister kingdom and of the length of his reign. But in the case of the kings of Israel, there follows: "And he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin," or some variation thereof; and in the accounts of the kings of Judah, even when the kings are said to have done "that which was good in the sight of Jehovah," the qualification is usually added, "nevertheless the high places were not taken away."

The prophets likewise placed this theme in the center of their preaching. It seemed to Elijah that he only was left

of Jehovah's loyal ones. Amos sees destruction hanging over Judah "because they have rejected the law of Jehovah," and over Israel because of universal oppression of the poor. To Hosea, Israel is a nation that has utterly forsaken Jehovah, to be compared only to a wife who, untrue to her husband, sinks to the lowest shame and infamy. And Isaiah cries (and the chapter forms an introduction to the book—Isa. i. 2ff): "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for Jehovah hath spoken; I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that deal corruptly. . . . From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and fresh stripes: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with oil." Jeremiah and, more fully still, Ezekiel detail the wicked history of the people. "I swear unto them," says Ezekiel (chapter xx.), "to bring them out of the land of Egypt. . . . But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: . . . neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt. . . . And I gave them statutes, . . . which if a man do, he shall live in them. . . . But . . . they walked not in my statutes, and rejected mine ordinances. . . . For when I had brought them into the land, . . . on every high hill, . . . they offered their sacrifices. . . . Wherefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith Jehovah God; Are ye not polluted after the manner of your fathers?"

Nahum sees the destruction of the bloody city of Nineveh, Obadiah beholds Edom's fall, and Zephaniah sees judgment hanging over all the nations; and among the later prophets the day of Jehovah, a dreadful day—dreadful because of the sin either of Israel or of the nations—is the common theme.

The Proverbs begin, "My son, if sinners entice thee, con-



sent thou not," and the Psalms likewise reflect the sense of sin:

"Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth."

(Ps. xii. 1.)

"There is none that doeth good, no not one."

(Ps. xiv. 3.)

Perhaps the chief glory of the Psalter is in its songs of penitence and forgiveness:

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness:

According to the multitude of thy tender mercies

Blot out my transgressions."

(Ps. li. 1.)

"Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven,

Whose sin is covered."

(Ps. xxxii. 1.)

Almost the entire sacrificial system reflects the same sense of sin. The chief exception is the Passover feast, marking the deliverance from Egypt connecting itself with the story of the process of redemption to which we shall presently come.

But through all there runs another thread, for alongside the story of sin the story of the process of redemption appears. Man's hope is always to bruise the head of the serpent, to rise triumphant over the sin which has been his fall. The disaster of the flood is the first effort at redemption by segregation and development of the good and the destruction of the wicked. And when sin reappears in the chosen family of Noah, ere long Abraham is chosen to become the father of a faithful nation. Of his sons, Isaac above Ishmael, and Jacob above Esau, are chosen. Then follows the long story of God's effort to purify and perfect the Hebrew people. Finally the division of the kingdom comes, and the tribes of Israel go the way of sin and disappear from the main course of the redemptive process. A nation purified in its entirety becomes a forlorn and buried hope. Isaiah preaches a doctrine of the remnant—a term used, too, in the book of Amos. And "the Lord shall recover the remnant of his people."

(Isa. xi. 11.) There enters herewith the hope that wickedness and the wicked shall be sifted out of the nation by the redemptive process, leaving the righteous remnant which shall fulfill the purpose of God.

This, as has been said, is the origin of the Church within the nation, a still further narrowing in the process of redemption. The remnant doctrine becomes the hope of the later prophets in the midst of the sinfulness of the nation as a whole. Micah, Isaiah's contemporary, reflects it; Jeremiah sets it in the center of much of his teaching; Ezekiel holds it out as the light of hope in the fast-falling darkness; and the prophecies of Zephaniah put into the mouth of the remnant the songs of the redeemed.

Through the entire process runs the yearning, loving call of Jehovah: "O Israel, return unto Jehovah thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity." (Hos. xiv. 1.) "Come now, let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be like wool." (Isa. i. 18.) "Cast away from you all your transgressions: . . . for why will ye die, O house of Israel? for I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith Jehovah: wherefore, turn yourselves, and live." (Ezek. xviii. 31, 32.)

Through the entire process again runs the method of choosing one man as the agent of God in his revelations of himself and in his education and redemption of the people. Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are the early types of such election as founders of the faithful holy race. Joseph likewise was chosen, not for himself, but to save his brethren; Moses also to lead the people. Jeremiah sets forth the status of prophecy when he says: "And Jehovah hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them." (Jer. xxv. 4.) In the same way the king was called "Jehovah's anointed." Anointed for what? Evidently for the purpose of guiding and leading the people of Israel.

There was then but one further step in the narrowing of the process of redemption, and that was, since these had not succeeded, to center all in one person, who after the manner of the prophet and king should be chosen and anointed above every other prophet and king for the redemption and final perfecting of this remnant or ecclesia or Church of Israel. The hope for this coming One and his coming age introduces us to the Messianic prophecy and the wider outlook.

QUESTIONS ON THE PROBLEMS OF CHAPTER XI.

1. What are the stages mentioned in this chapter in the story of the growth of sin?

2. Compare the address of Stephen in Acts vii. and the words of Jesus in Matthew xxiii. 34ff with Ezekiel's summary of Israel's history in chapter xx. Do you see any similarity in tone? It had been the tendency with many Israelites to rebuke the present generation by an appeal to the way in which the fathers kept the law of God. Ezekiel puts in a "not so" to the premise and rebukes the wanton idealization of the past. (Cf. Ps. lxxviii.)

3. What are the laws of war as Amos portrays them? (Amos i. 3, 13.) Consider how far the world has moved in mitigating the laws of warfare.

4. The Israelites thought that since they were Jehovah's people Jehovah would be on their side in every battle, irrespective of the character of their lives. What is the view of Amos (iii. 1, 2) concerning privilege in its relation to responsibility?

5. What is Hosea's description of the nation? (Hos. iv. 1ff.) Does Malachi see any improvement? (Mal. iii. 7-15.)

6. Compare Psalm i. and Psalm xxxii. for Old Testament ideals of blessedness.

7. What are the stages in the process of redemption? What is the result of salvation by the destruction of the wicked? What has been the result of the leaven-in-the-lump, the planting-of-the-mustard-seed process? Compare the ideals of Abraham's day with those of our own. If the President of the United States should do what David did, what would be the result?



## CHAPTER XII.

### MESSIANIC PROPHECY AND THE WIDER OUTLOOK.

## CHAPTER XII.

*First Day.*—Daniel vii. 1-14.

*Second Day.*—Psalm xcvi.

*Third Day.*—Isaiah xlii. 1-9 and xlix. 1-6.

*Fourth Day.*—Isaiah ii. 1-4 and xi. 1-10.

*Fifth Day.*—Malachi iii. and iv.

*Sixth Day.*—Read Ruth at a sitting. It can be done in about twenty minutes.

*Seventh Day.*—Read Jonah at a sitting.

## CHAPTER XII.

### MESSIANIC PROPHECY AND THE WIDER OUTLOOK.

MESSIANIC prophecy is the supreme glory of the Old Testament, for this is the deeper form taken by the story of redemption. More than the setting forth of the nature of God was the preaching of the hope that was in and through him—namely, of a future Messianic age, ushered in by a coming anointed one, or Messiah. It was this hope which shed its halo of glorious beauty over the prophetic disappointments and sorrows.

The expectation of a personal Messiah centered around the various phases of Israel's religious and national life. Basic in this expectation was perhaps the hope which clustered about the kingly office; for it was a Messiah-King that the Jews looked for, and the king in the Old Testament is repeatedly called Jehovah's anointed. David's charm of person and character as a ruler and the consequent glory of his dynasty furnish the nucleus for the form and character of the Messianic king. The Jews never forgot the splendor of the empire of David and Solomon and the spirit and heroism of the founder of the Davidic dynasty. This memory became more and more sacred and glorious to the tribe of Judah in proportion to the political humiliation which later times brought on. David's dying charge to Solomon is, according to 1 Kings ii. 2-4: "Be thou strong . . . that Jehovah may establish his word which he spoke concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee [said he] a man on the throne of Israel." This indefinite hope has come already in Micah (v. 2) to wear a definite look: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee

shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting." And Isaiah (ix. 6, 7) cries: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace, there shall be no end."

"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea,  
And from the river unto the ends of the earth.  
They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him;  
And his enemies shall lick the dust."

(Ps. lxxii. 8, 9. Compare also Isa. xlix. 23.)

But the Messianic kingdom is not merely an empire of conquest, for "out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. . . . And nations shall learn war no more." (Isa. ii. 3, 4.)

"Mercy and truth are met together;  
Righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

(Ps. lxxxv. 10.)

This is the ideal that age holds forth.

Some of the ideals again cluster around the prophetic office. "Jehovah thy God will raise up unto thee," declares Moses, according to Deuteronomy xviii. 15, "a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me." And Isaiah lxi. 1ff gives the marks of the Anointed One. They are not the sword of the conqueror and the scepter of the king, but the message of love and life and light to the unfortunate and the downtrodden: "The Spirit of Jehovah is upon me; because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the year of Jehovah's



favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn."<sup>1</sup>

Some of the ideals center in the priesthood and the temple. "Wherefore say," declares Numbers xxv. 12, 13, "Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace: and it shall be unto him, and to his seed after him, the covenant of an everlasting priesthood." "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, an holy nation." (Ex. xix. 6.) Likewise Haggai preaches of the second temple that the desire (or desirable things) of all nations shall come and the glory of this house shall be greater than the former. Jeremiah writes concerning the law: "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith Jehovah, I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." (Jer. xxxi. 33.) And Zechariah declares: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness." (Zech. xiii. 1.)

Still other passages speak of the coming of Jehovah himself in person, as the Redeemer and the Ruler of his people. The ideal of the theocracy shall be consummated. "Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord Jehovah will come as a mighty one, and his arm will rule for him. . . . He will feed his flock like a shepherd: he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom." (Isa. xl. 9-11.) Obadiah likewise closes his modest little book with the ponderous thought "and the kingdom shall be Jehovah's."

But of all the prophetic notes that sound the Messianic ideal, the most beautiful are those that come to expression in

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<sup>1</sup>This passage, with the exception of the last two clauses, was quoted by Jesus in his home at Nazareth as referring to his mission. (Luke iv. 18ff.)

the doctrine of the suffering servant of Jehovah. In order to understand these, it is best to pause a moment and trace another line of prophetic development, for without the wider outlook all of this wonderful Messianic hope is but a bit of Jewish national selfishness.

The nobler line of prophetic thought was ever struggling with the narrow circle of Israelitish exclusiveness. As soon as Israel, having learned from Moses that Jehovah was her God, caught from Elijah the thought that her God was "the God," so soon did the pride of spiritual privilege take hold of the people. They seemed to feel as if the world were made for them, and that the "nations" or Gentiles were of little worth except for a final demonstration of the glory of God's wrath. The thought of Messianic prophecy is, however, *noblesse oblige*. If Joseph was elected that he might save his brethren, Abraham no less was chosen with view to a wider purpose. "Get thee out of thy country," was the Abrahamic ideal, "and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing: . . . and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. xii. 1-3.)

The prophet Amos comes forward with a corollary of this promise. "Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel, saith Jehovah. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt?" but was it not I also who brought up "the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?" (Amos ix. 7.) Isaiah predicts: "Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up into the mountain of Jehovah." (Isa. ii. 3.) "Also the foreigners, . . . for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all peoples." (Isa. lvi. 6, 7.) "I, Jehovah, have called thee in righteousness, . . . for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." (Isa. xlii. 6, 7.)

This last passage introduces us to the suffering servant of Jehovah, for it is of him that the passage speaks (Isa. xlii. 1, 6, 7): "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul delighteth." But what had been the history of this chosen nation of which the term "servants" seems to be used at least in some of these passages? Always the spoil for the spoiler, the greatest sufferer among the nations. Wanderer, slave, defeated, conquered, humiliated—this was the nation's history. We have seen how the prophet reaches out toward the philosophy of it all. In painting the deepest experiences of his own heart (Isa. liii.), as he identifies himself, a prophet of God, with the prophet-people of the world, he also pictures across the centuries the ideal One who was to come: "He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." And why? "He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." Surely, then, "he hath borne our griefs, and carried out sorrows: . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Here Messianic prophecy and the entire Old Testament reaches its highest point—a point too high for the masses to attain, and one which was long lost sight of before the coming of Him who lived it before men in his own life. The suffering of God's servant is for the world, be it the suffering of prophet, nation, or Messiah.

The ninety-eighth Psalm declares:

"He shall judge the world with righteousness,  
And the peoples with equity."

Daniel says (vii. 14) that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve the Son of man; Haggai (ii. 7) refers to the coming of the precious or desirable things of all na-

tions; and Zechariah (vi. 15) affirms that "they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of Jehovah;" "Yea, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Jehovah of hosts" (viii. 22).

It is in relation to this ideal that the book of Ruth finds its highest significance. "As a piece of literature," says Thatcher, "it is the most charming short story in the Old Testament." Its purpose, however, is not merely to give a picture of a beautiful pastoral scene, and even the filling of a gap in the ancestry of David seems secondary. The situation was this: The tendency toward exclusiveness frequently went to extremes, and the efforts to guard the religion of Jehovah from outside influence caused from time to time much cruelty toward some foreign women, for example, who had married Hebrew men. The book of Ruth in true prophetic spirit deplores the whole narrow circle of ideas that would make the Hebrew people gather the cloaks of their own self-righteousness about them and treat all others as heathen dogs. Many deem it a protest against Nehemiah. The author gives a typical story of how love and kindness can convert the foreigner to all of the privileges of Israel's religion and seems to plead that Israel make her God loved by herself being lovely. In other words, it is better to convert than to despise and mistreat the Gentiles.

But the classic in all this realm of thought, going much beyond the book of Ruth in its view of the narrowness of the Israelites and in urging Israel's mission to the world, is the book of Jonah, justly called "the greatest single missionary document ever penned." Yet it is the most abused and misunderstood of all the books of the Bible, Christian and scoffer alike seeming to know nothing about it save its connection with a great fish story. But Jonah strikes the keynote of Hebrew universalism, and therefore it sounds true to the fuller harmony of Messianic prophecy.

The word of Jehovah comes to the prophet and says:

"Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness is come up before me." But "Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of Jehovah." Why does Jonah flee? Is it that he does not want to preach, as is the case with many of our modern men? Can it be that he objects to the message? What could be more welcome to a Hebrew prophet than that the arch-spoiler is about to fall? This is a favorite theme with many of the prophets. The day of Jehovah is at hand, the spoiler shall feel its weight. The secret of Jonah's reluctance is that he has caught a different view of God. "O Jehovah," he reminds God after Nineveh had been forgiven, "was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I hastened to flee unto Tarshish, for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in loving-kindness, and repentest thee of the evil." (Jon. iv. 2.) Jonah, in other words, by his own statement was perfectly willing to preach Nineveh's destruction, but he knew God's purpose was to bring Nineveh to repentance that he might save her. The Jews felt that they were God's people, and that the remainder of the world was not to share the love and mercy of Jehovah. Jehovah's glory was rather to be apparent in the destruction of his enemies. They were selfishly enjoying their privileges. When the gourd which grew up in a night to shelter angry Jonah from the sun had withered, God said to him: "Jonah, are you angry because the gourd is dead? You did not plant it, nor work with it, nor make it to grow; it came up in a night, and in a night it has perished. Why, then, should I not have pity upon Nineveh, that great city, in which is the life of a man whom I have created, and even innocent beasts of the field?" Let Israel learn this lesson, says Jehovah through the voice of the book of Jonah, that the whole history of the Hebrew race and the special favor which God has bestowed upon it find their real

meaning only in a preparation of Israel for bearing the message of salvation to the world.

The flood was an attempt at redemption by destruction. The call of Abraham and the history of the Hebrews, a long process toward redemption by the successive stages of a redeeming race, a redeeming nation, a redeeming remnant or Church, a redeeming Messiah—all to consummate in a universally redeemed Messianic kingdom. This is the Old Testament message as a whole, and no view, however full it may be as an analysis of separate books, really introduces us to the Old Testament unless it catches this. This is the real reason of its universal vogue in the civilization of twenty centuries.

#### QUESTIONS ON THE PROBLEMS OF CHAPTER XII.

1. What would be your definition of Messianic prophecy? Is your definition both comprehensive and definite?
2. Which phases of the Messianic ideal did Jesus most emphasize? Which phases did the Pharisees emphasize? the Herodians?
3. What are the marks of the Anointed One in Isaiah lxi. 1ff? They were quoted by Jesus in Luke iv. 16ff. At what other time in his life did he make use of and apply this passage?
4. In what sense was Cyrus the Persian "anointed" of Jehovah? (Isa. xlv. 24-xlv. vi.) How far are other nations chosen of God in a sense similar to Israel?
5. Read the book of Jonah at a single sitting with the missionary idea in view. What is your opinion and estimate of the book?
6. Was Israel's Golden Age in the past or in the future? Does the Old Testament make most of the Edenic Age, of the Mosaic Age, of the Age of David and Solomon, or of the Messianic Age? Which of these was increasingly and which decreasingly emphasized? Or, in general, what relation did they bear in the ideals and thoughts of the Old Testament writers?
7. What is your estimate of the Old Testament and its relative importance in the religious life of to-day?

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